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FROM

The Rev. T. B. Sargent, D.D.

TO HIS FRIEND,

Thomas O. Summers.

JUNE, MDCCCLXXV.

Wes. 17/0

27

1772

WESLEYAN HYMNOLOGY.

Thomas B. Sargent & 1845

WESLEYAN HYMNOLOGY;

OR,

A COMPANION

TO THE

WESLEYAN HYMN BOOK:

COMPRISING

REMARKS,

CRITICAL, EXPLANATORY AND CAUTIONARY,

DESIGNED TO PROMOTE

THE MORE PROFITABLE USE

OF THE VOLUME.

BY

WILLIAM PENINGTON BURGESS,

WESLEYAN MINISTER.

LONDON:

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P R E F A C E .

FROM a very early age, the writer of these pages has been familiar with the Wesleyan Hymn Book: and as soon as he was capable of discriminating between such poetical compositions as are truly excellent and worthy of admiration, and such as are of an inferior order and more fit to be consigned to oblivion, he began to entertain a high opinion of the work. He has now been employed as a minister of the church of Christ for upwards of thirty years; and during this period, while conducting the public services of the sanctuary, or the devotional exercises of smaller and more select companies, he has had abundant opportunities to avail himself of the admirable specimens of sacred poetry, published by the venerated founder of Methodism. In common with his honored

brethren in the ministry, and with the flocks among which they have been called to labour in the word and doctrine, he has often been instructed and admonished, reproved and stimulated, comforted and animated, while singing these songs of Zion. Many a time has he been impressed with the idea, that nothing on earth bears a greater resemblance to heaven, than a number of Christians uniting, with the spirit and with the understanding, to sing the praises of their God and Saviour. Often has it appeared to him, as well as to his fellow-worshippers, as though heaven were indeed opened upon earth, and glory begun below.

While fully convinced however, of the superior value and excellence of the Wesleyan Hymns, the writer has long thought that something might yet be done to make them more useful, more conducive to general edification. There are interesting circumstances connected with the original composition of many of these hymns, which ought to be more extensively known than they have hitherto been. There are beauties of senti-

ment and beauties of diction, which have been overlooked, probably, by the great mass of readers; but which, if pointed out, will be relished and admired by all persons of correct judgment and good taste. There are in some passages references to historical records, which greatly need explanation. As one proof of this may be mentioned verse 2 of that beautiful and sublime composition, Hymn 552; which perhaps is not understood by one in a thousand of those who use it. There are many passages, which require to be qualified and guarded; many expressions, which, if not so qualified and guarded, may be grossly misunderstood, and may lead to highly pernicious sentiments. Truth and error sometimes lie in close contiguity; and if that which is substantially correct and true be expressed in the strong and glowing language of poetry—such poetry, especially, as that of Charles Wesley—it may bear a very great resemblance to that which is inaccurate and false. Moreover, many hymns and passages of hymns, which may be very advantageously read in the closet,

or in seasons of retirement and solitude, are wholly unfit for public worship; and if introduced into large and promiscuous assemblies, will be likely to do more harm than good. Perhaps it would not be hazarding much to assert, that the better any collection of hymns is, both as to sentiment and as to language, the more need is there, that it should be accompanied by explanations, advices and cautions. For if that which is truly excellent once become an auxiliary to error, its very excellence will make it the more extensively and the more permanently injurious.

It never was the author's intention to prepare a regular and complete comment on the whole hymn-book. This undoubtedly might be done; and it would possibly be less difficult to write critical and explanatory observations on every individual hymn, than to compress what is really necessary to be said, so as to include it all within a small volume. A large volume, containing remarks on every hymn, would necessarily involve much unprofitable repetition; since in many

cases, the remarks appended to one hymn, would be equally applicable to many others. Such a volume would be unsuitable to the great body of those, who use the Wesleyan collection; and its price would place it beyond their reach.

The present work, it is hoped, will supply, in some degree, the deficiency that has hitherto existed. It may teach the Wesleyan congregations to appreciate more justly that treasure, which has been transmitted to them by their predecessors; and to use it in a way more conducive to their individual benefit, and more calculated to promote the spread of pure and primitive Christianity throughout our own country and throughout the whole world.

The Wesleyan hymns stand very high in the writer's estimation, not only on account of their superior character, as poetical compositions, but because he considers them as illustrating, recommending and guarding the religion of the New Testament; that experimental and practical piety, which only can make us truly happy, either in this life

or in that which is to come. Sacred poetry, in which we have noble ideas, clothed in elegant and dignified language, and in which the all-important truths of our holy religion are correctly and impressively exhibited, can scarcely be valued too highly or perused too frequently.

With the most cordial affection towards all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and with hopes of meeting them all in the regions of heavenly bliss, and of uniting with them to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb around the throne of God, for ever and ever, the author bids adieu to his readers, and subscribes himself their servant for Christ's sake.

WILLIAM P. BURGESS.

Cheltenham, January 31, 1845.

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WESLEYAN HYMNOLOGY;
OR,
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WESLEYAN HYMN BOOK:
COMPRISING REMARKS,
CRITICAL, EXPLANATORY, AND CAUTIONARY.

CHAPTER I.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE DISPLAYED IN THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF METHODISM—JOHN WESLEY—JOHN FLETCHER—CHARLES WESLEY—PECULIAR CALLING OF THE LATTER, AS THE BARD OF METHODISM—TESTIMONIES TO THE EXCELLENCE OF HIS SACRED POETRY, FROM JAMES MONTGOMERY, REV. THOMAS ROBERTS, REV. RICHARD WATSON, REV. THOMAS JACKSON.

To the genuine Christian it is always a pleasant and a profitable task, to trace the hand of Divine Providence, directing and controlling the various revolutions of human affairs; especially in those things which are connected with the salvation of souls, and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom. The establishment and spread of Christianity in the early ages—

the commencement and progress of the reformation from Popery, in more recent times—and last of all, the rise and growth of Methodism in the British dominions and in foreign countries—all furnish abundant proof of a wise, gracious, and almighty Providence, ever watchful over the best interests of mankind, ever careful to promote the glory of God and the welfare of his creatures. Among the chosen instruments employed by heaven in originating and maturing the system of Methodism, the venerable John Wesley holds the first place. For this situation he was perhaps better fitted, than any other mortal that has ever appeared since the days of St. Paul. His natural abilities—his literary acquirements—his diligent and persevering habits—his ardent piety—and his deep-felt conviction of a divine call to a most important work—all tended to make him, in a very eminent degree, a vessel of honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use. It pleased God to endow him also with a bodily constitution, unusually firm and vigorous, and to lengthen out his life to extreme old age; so that for more than half a century, with astonishing zeal and success, he personally superintended the movements and directed the energies of that mighty machine, which God himself had constructed and set in motion.

While John Wesley was engaged, with untiring assiduity, in visiting the cities, towns, and

villages of the land, preaching every where the unsearchable riches of Christ, and watching, with all the tenderness and vigilance of a faithful pastor, over the flock, which he had gathered out of the world, Divine Providence raised up a most able and affectionate co-adjutor in John Fletcher of Madeley. By his exalted piety and his deep acquaintance with the things of God, this excellent man was admirably qualified to illustrate and defend those important views of evangelical truth, which had been conscientiously adopted by Wesley. For cogency of argumentation, felicity of illustration, elegant simplicity of style, and uniform sweetness of temper, the controversial writings of John Fletcher have rarely been equalled, and never excelled. To the interests of Methodism his writings have rendered services, scarcely less important than those of Wesley himself.

And while contemplating the human agency by which God was pleased to carry on the great work of Methodism, we should never forget the venerated name of Charles Wesley. He was a lively and powerful preacher of the gospel, and in his earlier days, assisted his brother very considerably by his ministerial labours. But his chief and distinguishing excellence was, his talent for sacred poetry. He has been denominated, with great justice and propriety, the *bard of Methodism*.

As God was about to raise up a new body of professing Christians, who were in time to become very numerous on both sides of the Atlantic, it was proper and necessary that they should be furnished with a sufficient variety of suitable hymns for public worship and for all devotional purposes. Nothing existed in those days, that could by any means answer the demands or supply the wants of this new Society. The version of the Psalms by Brady and Tate, though it possesses some merit and exhibits some specimens of tolerably good poetry, would on the whole have been very meagre and unsatisfactory to those who had entered so largely into the enjoyment of Christian experience and Christian privileges. Even Watts's Psalms and Hymns, though by far the best collection of devotional poetry then extant, were in some respects unsuitable, and, as a whole, insufficient. As John Wesley and Fletcher had each his own peculiar department in the common work—a department for which each was eminently fitted, and to which their energies were faithfully and perseveringly applied—so also Charles Wesley had his own peculiar department; one for which he was specially qualified, and in which no other person could have succeeded so well. Had not Charles Wesley been providentially led to write sacred poetry, there would have been a very serious deficiency in the system of Methodism;

its progress would not have been so rapid, nor its influences so extensive. It could not have been so serviceable in kindling and sustaining the devotional spirit in the great congregation, or in aiding the religious exercises of the family and the duties of the closet. It could not have contributed so largely to alarm the careless and impenitent sinner; to encourage and assist the sincere seeker of salvation; to comfort the Christian believer amid all the difficulties and discouragements of his way; to urge him on to the pursuit and attainment of high degrees of holiness; to administer consolation to the subjects of pain and affliction; and to enable the dying Christian to meet the last enemy with composure and fortitude, triumphing through his great Redeemer. To Watts and to Charles Wesley this honour peculiarly belongs; and to the latter in as high a sense as to the former. Watts indeed took the lead; he had the precedence, in point of time: but in every other respect, the two poets may be considered as occupying the same rank: only with this difference, that Wesley's talents were destined specially to serve the interests of Methodism; and Watts's, those of other Christian denominations.

If we view the Wesleyan hymns merely as poetical compositions, we shall find them to be of a very superior description, and deserving of

the highest rank among productions of this class. Excepting a small proportion of Watts's hymns, and some of more recent date by Cowper, Montgomery, Heber, and a few others, there are no hymns whatever that deserve to be ranked with those of Charles Wesley. Doddridge, Toplady, Newton, Cennick, Steele, Beddome, and a host of others, are of an inferior class. Even Watts, with all his greatness and excellence, is not entitled to that unqualified commendation, which by many has been bestowed upon him. It has long been the opinion of the writer of these remarks, that in a poetical point of view the great majority of Watts's Psalms and Hymns are not a whit above mediocrity, and many of them below it. It was a circumstance highly advantageous to the poetical character of Charles Wesley, that his compositions were submitted to the keen and discriminating eye of his brother John, and that from the whole was formed that admirable selection, which is found in the general Hymn Book. For on examining the entire mass, it will appear that those hymns and verses which were omitted, were, with few exceptions, much inferior to those which were taken, and that we have in that publication the best and choicest portions of the whole. Had the excellent Watts possessed some friend, who would have acted in a similar way towards him, by selecting, abridging, and retrenching from

the entire mass of his sacred poetry, and would have published this residuum only, that eminent man might have appeared to greater advantage as a Christian poet. There are many of Watts's compositions so meagre, so barren in poetic beauty, so destitute of dignity, that were these the only specimens of his ability, we might doubt whether he ought to be numbered among poets at all. But on the other hand it must be allowed, that some of his compositions possess high degrees of excellence and merit. Those of Watts's Psalms and Hymns that are embodied in the Wesleyan collection, are the best that he ever wrote. Had he written no others, his name would have been immortalized among the lovers of sacred poetry, and his rank among Christian poets would have been as high as it now is.

Some may be disposed to enquire how it is, that the high claims of Charles Wesley, as a writer of sacred verse, have been so generally overlooked, and that his compositions are so little known beyond the pale of the Methodist societies and congregations. Various causes, undoubtedly, have concurred to produce this effect. That they who are strangers to inward and experimental religion, should not relish or admire such works, is just what might be expected. These hymns are full of religion; every sentiment is most decidedly edifying and devout.

There is nothing to gratify a carnal taste; nothing to encourage pride, self-esteem, love of worldly honour and applause; nothing to meet the feelings of those, who are desirous of sensual pleasures and indulgences; and nothing adapted to the views of those, who would reduce religion to a mere set of opinions and a round of external observances. They who reject all that constitutes the life and power and essence of inward religion will of course reject a book, which every where assumes the supreme importance and the absolute necessity of that experience, to which they know themselves to be total strangers. The depravity of our fallen nature, the carnality of the mind, and our consequent aversion to the heart-searching and humbling truths of Holy Scripture will fully account for the neglect and dislike of these hymns among many.

That these hymns have been greatly undervalued by others, may be attributed to Calvinistic prejudices. They who in their theological views adopt a larger or smaller proportion of the peculiarities of Calvinism, will of course seek for hymns written by persons of their own sentiments; and this unquestionably is one principal reason why by many the hymns of Watts, Doddridge, Toplady, Hart, and Newton are preferred to those of Wesley. Had Charles Wesley been a Calvinist, and had he, with precisely the same degree of poetical talent and

skill, interspersed a little Calvinian theology throughout his hymns, they would no doubt have been lauded and prized most highly among the Independents, the Baptists, and all classes of evangelical non-conformists; and ere this time if Watts, Doddridge, Hart, and similar writers had not been excluded from their sanctuaries, at any rate Wesley would have taken the precedence of them all, and would have stood first on their list. And among the pious ministers and members of the church of England, some, in consequence of their Calvinistic predilections, and others, through a fear of receiving or sanctioning any thing that is not stamped with the approbation and recommended by the authority of prelates and convocations, royal declarations, and acts of parliament, have remained insensible to the merits of Charles Wesley's sacred poetry.

The numerous ministers or others, who within the last half century have published collections of hymns for congregational use, have in general extracted more or less from Wesley's Hymns: but in many cases, while they have been careful to name other authors, they have concealed the name of Wesley, and have either published his hymns anonymously, or have ascribed them to a false author. In proof of this, it will be sufficient to state that in Rippon's Selection (eighteenth edition) there are at least twenty-seven of

Charles Wesley's hymns without his name: in Willcock's Collection there are fifteen of Wesley's hymns, either without any name, or ascribed to some one else: in Montgomery's Christian Psalmist (third edition) there are twenty-four of Charles Wesley's Hymns without his name, and ten others marked as Moravian, which were translated from the German original by John Wesley. In Bickersteth's Christian Psalmody (1841) there are twenty-two of Wesley's Hymns, and in Conder's Congregational Hymn Book (1836) there are twenty-nine, either without any name, or with a wrong name appended to them. As specimens of the erroneous authorship ascribed to certain hymns, it may be stated that in various publications,

Hymn 65—

“Ye virgin souls, arise,”

has been attributed to Doddridge ;

Hymn 75—

“Lift your eyes of faith and see,”

to De Courcy ;

Hymn 531—

“Christ, whose glory fills the skies,”

to Toplady; all of which were undoubtedly composed by Charles Wesley: and

Hymn 190—

“Jesus, thy blood and righteousness,”

has been attributed to Cennick;

Hymn 673—

“Commit thou all thy griefs,”

to Luther; both of which were translated from the German by John Wesley.

Montgomery, the bard of Sheffield, appears to have been the first man of genius, the first, deserving the name of a poet, that was both able and willing to do justice to the poetical merits of Charles Wesley. From his introductory essay, prefixed to the “Christian Psalmist,” the following admirable remarks are extracted.

“Next to Dr. Watts as a hymn-writer, undoubtedly stands the Rev. Charles Wesley.

* * * * * Christian experience, from the depths of affliction, through all the gradations of doubt, fear, desire, faith, hope, expectation, to the transports of perfect love, in the very beams of the beatific vision—Christian experience furnishes him with everlasting and inexhaustible themes; and it must be confessed, that he has celebrated them with an affluence of diction, and a splendour of colouring, rarely surpassed. At the same time he has invested them with a power of truth, and endeared them both to the imagination and affections, with a pathos which makes feeling conviction, and leaves the understanding little to do, but to acquiesce in the decisions of the heart. As the poet of Methodism, he has sung the doctrines of the gospel, as they are expounded among that people, dwelling

especially on the personal appropriation of the words of eternal life to the sinner, or the saint, as the test of his actual state before God, admitting nothing less than the full assurance of faith, as the privilege of believers—

‘ Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,
And looks to that alone,
Laughs at impossibilities
And cries—‘ It shall be done ! ’
‘ Faith lends its realizing light ;
The clouds disperse, the shadows fly ;
The Invisible appears in sight,
And God is seen by mortal eye.’

These are glimpses of our author’s manner, broad indeed and awful, but signally illustrative ; like lightning out of darkness, revealing for a moment the whole hemisphere. * * * * * If Charles Wesley’s hymns are less varied than might have been desired for general purposes, it was from choice, and predilection for certain views of the gospel in its effects upon human minds, and not from want of diversity of gifts. It is probable that the severer taste of his brother, the Rev. John Wesley, greatly tempered the extravagance of Charles, pruned his luxuriations, and restrained his impetuosity, in those hymns of his, which form a large proportion of the Methodist collection ; the few which are understood to be John’s, in that book, being of a more intellectual character than what are known to be

Charles's, while the latter are wonderfully improved by abridgment and compression, in comparison with the originals, as they were first given to the public."

The following instances will serve as specimens of the extent, to which many of Charles Wesley's hymns are abridged in the collection published by his brother.

Hymns 266, 267, 268—

"Soldiers of Christ, arise."

"But above all lay hold."

"In fellowship, alone."

are reduced from 16 double verses to 12.

Hymn 294—

"Jesus, thou sovereign Lord of all."

from 10 verses to 5.

Hymns 314, 315—

"Hark! how the watchmen cry."

"Angels your march oppose."

from 12 double verses to 8.

Hymns 16, 17—

"Happy the souls that first believed."

"Jesus, from whom all blessings flow."

from 30 verses to 22.

And Hymn 2—

"Come, sinners, to the gospel feast."

from 24 verses to 9.

The following appropriate remarks are from the pen of the Rev. Thomas Roberts.

“The high calling of Methodism is experimental religion. To depict experimental religion in all its varieties, in a manner no poet ever did, was the high calling of the *bard of Methodism*. The amiable, candid and poetical Watts discovered not only the modesty of a christian, but the discernment, without the envy, of a poet, when he said, to have been the writer of Mr. Charles Wesley’s evangelical paraphrase of ‘Wrestling Jacob,’ he would relinquish all the poetic honours derived from his own numerous productions. In the poetry of Mr. Charles Wesley we find all the views and feelings, all the agonies and triumphs of the Christian, in every stage of the divine life, from the commencement of the great work of regeneration in the conviction of the sinner, to the beatification of the saint before the throne of God and the Lamb. * * * * There will not be denied to these compositions, in addition to their perfection of sentiment, many beauties belonging legitimately to the poetic order. The diction displays both purity and perspicuity throughout, and strength combined with chasteness in every part. A rough, inharmonious line can scarcely be met with. Whence is this undeniable combination of harmony, fullness and precision, so eminently characterizing Mr. C. Wesley’s poetry? It is a spontaneous effect; a genial effusion, flowing from a heart, forcibly, tenderly and warmly impressed with

the profound reality and infinite importance of the subjects. * * * How must that poet have felt, who realizing

‘————— in dread array,

‘The pomp of that tremendous day’

places, at the same time, ‘a half-awakened child of man’ upon a stupendous site, respecting his personal concern in the awful process of the judgment—a site, which makes dizzy the very imagination of the reader, in its bare contemplation.

‘Lo! on a narrow neck of land,

‘Twixt two unbounded seas I stand,

Secure, insensible!

A point of time, a moment’s space,

Removes me to that heavenly place,

Or—shuts me up in hell.’

“To readers possessing any refinement of perception, there will appear in these works a striking excellence, elevating them above most compositions of the kind. With all their warmth of piety (and where can we meet with more ardour?) there are no luscious, disgusting epithets, such as frequently offend in the hymns of some of the Latin fathers, and in many of the present age. The manliness of the piety is in unison with the strength and dignity of the diction. Nor are these hymns upheld by the weak support of unmeaning supernumeraries. No ‘expletives their feeble aid *do* join.’ And the opposite

defect finds no place: they are not debased by the low familiarity of abbreviations; a fault for which nothing can atone. If these be disagreeable, when occurring in addresses to the divine majesty, they become excessively offensive when the Almighty is made to talk, if it may be so said, in vulgar, colloquial terms. But here we meet with no continual recurrence of *I'll, you'll, they'll, won't, can't, shan't*, and the rest of the humble family of the abbreviations.

“There is another perfection in Mr. Charles Wesley’s compositions. Many as they are, he has made them all conform to that canon of English lyrics, that every line should have a corresponding rhyme. Dr. Watts did not take the liberty to transgress this law, without apologizing for his offences. But a troop of unlicensed hymn-wrights, finding their convenience in this method of penning lines, have not only scrawled in Short and Common Metre, in which Dr. Watts presumed to overleap the legal boundary, but they give us verses of eight syllables, both in iambics and anapæsts, and even verses of ten syllables, without unison of sound at the termination of the first and third lines. This defect is not found in any of Mr. C. Wesley’s hymns.

“Nevertheless it is not for the purpose merely of completing a rhyme, that in any instance we perceive our poet compelled to adopt a corresponding word; giving (to use the shrewd remark

of a poet) 'one line for rhyme, and one for sense.' And he is equally remote from the tame, prosaic admeasurements, flowing from one projected term to its forestalled associate; for when a stanza is begun, we do not drop down by a current, as it were, to a precise landing-place. Both the anomaly and the spontaneity of rhyme are excluded. They are thrown off to an equal distance on each hand, by a poet possessing sufficient energies to maintain a dignified medium.

"These, with many more, are the classical merits of Mr. C. Wesley's compositions. The language is chaste and pure, the numbers smooth, the rhyme well maintained; strong without clumsiness; elegant without flimsiness; having that uniform temperation of original qualities, which, in every art, gives the inimitable characteristic of a master. Thus Raphael is recognised in the Cartoons, Sir Christopher Wren in St. Paul's, and Charles Wesley in Sacred Poetry.

"As the soul gives being and character to the individual man, so the pure, vigorous and evangelical piety, vitally embracing every member, and glowing throughout the whole body of Mr. C. Wesley's hymns, gives them an unqualified claim to a distinct and unrivalled character, in the department of devotional piety." *

* From a Pamphlet entitled, "Hymnology; or a Dissertation on Hymns," &c.—Published at Bristol, 1808.

These remarks may advantageously be followed by those of another distinguished writer, the Rev. Richard Watson.

“ For the spiritual advantages which the Methodists have derived from his inestimable hymns, the memory of Mr. Charles Wesley deserves to be had in their everlasting remembrance; and they are not insensible of the value of the gift. Their taste has been formed by this high standard; and we may venture to say, there are few collections of psalms and hymns in use in any other congregations, that would, as *a whole*, be tolerated amongst them; so powerful has been the effect produced by his superior compositions. The clear and decisive character of the religious experience which they describe, their force and life and earnestness, commended them at the first to the piety of the societies, and through that insensibly elevated the judgment of thousands, who otherwise might have relished, as strongly as others, the rudeness of the old version of the Psalms, the tameness of the new, and the tinsel metaphors and vapid sentimentalisms which disfigure numerous compositions of different authors. * * * * From the rustic rhyming of Sternhold and Hopkins to the psalms and hymns of Dr. Watts, the advance was indeed unspeakably great. A few however, only of the latter, are unexceptionable throughout. When they are so, they leave nothing to be desired;

but many of Dr. Watts's compositions begin well, often nobly, and then fall off into dulness and puerility; and not a few are utterly worthless, as being poor in thought, and still more so in expression. The piety and sweetness of Doddridge's hymns must be felt; but they are often verbose and languid, and withal faulty and affected in their metaphors. The Olney Collection has many delightful hymns for private use; but they are far from being generally fit for the public service of religion, and are often in bad taste; not even excepting many of Cowper's. * * * *

“To Dr. Watts and to Mr. Charles Wesley the largest share of gratitude is due from the churches of Christ, for that rich supply of Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs, in which the assemblies of the pious may make melody unto the Lord, in strains which angels might often delight to hear. No others are to be named with these sweet singers of the spiritual Israel; and it is probable, that through the medium of their verse chiefly will the devotions of our churches be poured forth till time shall be no more. No other poets ever attained such elevation as this. They honoured God in their gifts, and God has thus honoured them to be the mouth of his people to him, in their solemn assemblies, in their private devotions, and in the struggles of death itself.

“It would be an unprofitable task to compare the merits of these two great psalmists. Each had excellences not found in the other. Watts however excels Mr. Charles Wesley only in the sweeter flow of his numbers, and in the feeling and sympathy of those of his hymns, which are designed to administer comfort to the afflicted. In composition he was, in all respects, decidedly his inferior; in good taste, classic elegance, uniformity, correct rhyming, and vigour. As to the theology of their respective hymns, leaving particular doctrines out of the question, the great truths of religious experience are far more clearly and forcibly embodied by Mr. Charles Wesley than by Dr. Watts. * * * *

The greater part of his poetry was consecrated to promote the work of God in the heart. Never were its different branches, from the first awakening of the soul out of the sleep of sin, to its state of perfected holiness, with all its intermediate conflicts and exercises, more justly or scripturally expressed; and there is perhaps, no uninspired book from which, as to ‘the deep things of God’ so much is to be learned, as from his Hymn Book in use in the Methodist congregations.” *

To these observations may properly be subjoined those of an eminent minister of the present day, the Rev. Thomas Jackson.

* From Watson’s Life of the Rev. John Wesley

“It is as a writer of devotional poetry, that Mr. Charles Wesley will be permanently remembered, and that his name will live in the annals of the church. In the composition of hymns adapted to Christian worship, he certainly has no equal in the English language, and is perhaps superior to every other uninspired man that ever lived. It does not appear that any person besides himself, in any section of the universal church has either written so many hymns, or hymns of such surpassing excellence. * * * *

While he possessed the true poetic spirit, he thoroughly understood the art of poetry; so that his compositions are not only free from the literary blemishes and defects, which disfigure the works of many less-instructed writers, but in their numbers and general structure they invariably display the hand of a master. * * *

While his sentiments and language are admired by the most competent judges of good writing, his hymns are perfectly intelligible to the common people; thousands of whom, possessed of spiritual religion, feel their truth and power, and sing them with rapturous delight. His metres are very numerous, perhaps more so than those of any other English writer whatever; and it is difficult to say in which of them he most excelled. This variety renders the reading of his books exceedingly agreeable. His cadences never pall on the ear, and never weary the

attention. Like scenes in nature, and the best musical compositions, they are perpetually varying, and charm by their novelty. * . * *

Occasionally he did not hesitate to borrow a thought from other men, and cast it into his own mould; and while he proposed it in his own incomparable diction, he never failed to expand and improve it. He did not borrow the thoughts of other men, because he was himself destitute of the inventive faculty; for his hymns which are perfectly original, are far more numerous and embrace a wider range of subjects, than those of any other writer in the English language. His object in composition was first his own edification, and then the edification of the church; and he was ready to press into his service whatever was likely to advance these holy designs.

* * * His was the genuine lyrical spirit, sanctified and invigorated by the Holy Ghost, expressing itself in gushes and sudden bursts of feeling, ascending at once to the loftiest eminence, apparently without an effort. He aimed at 'no middle flight,' but at a direct ascent to the heaven of heavens. There he beheld the Three-One God, as the endless portion of his people. Seeing time and created nature in all their insignificance, and anticipating the consummation of all things, he bursts forth in a strain more than human—

' Vanish then this world of shadows !
Pass the former things away !
Lord ! appear, appear to glad us
With the dawn of endless day.
O conclude this mortal story !
Throw this universe aside !
Come, eternal King of glory,
Now descend, and take thy bride.'

" One of the most striking peculiarities of Mr. Charles Wesley's poetry is its energy. He always writes with vigour; for he is always in earnest. As he felt deeply, and had a singular command of language; he expresses himself with great force. Never does he weaken his lines by unnecessary epithets, or any redundancy of words; and he evidently aimed more at strength than smoothness. Yet he had too fine an ear ever to be rugged; and whenever he chose, he could rival the most tuneful of his brethren in the liquid softness of his numbers. * * *

" But the crowning excellence of his hymns is the spirit of deep and fervent piety which they every where breathe. In the range of their subjects they embrace the entire system of revealed truth, both doctrinal and practical, with the principal facts of Scripture history; and apply the whole of them to purposes of personal godliness. * * * All these he has illustrated with a diction of unrivalled purity, strength and beauty, and formed into addresses

to God, in adoration, confession, prayer, deprecation, thanksgiving and praise. * * *

“The poetry of this very eminent man is thoroughly evangelical. It is humiliating to see in the collections of hymns used by Arian and Socinian congregations, many which bear the names of orthodox divines. They relate mostly to the works and providence of God, and other subjects of a collateral kind, without any reference to the trinity of persons in the godhead, the atonement for sin made by the death of Christ, justification through faith in his blood, and the influences of the Holy Ghost, as one of the benefits of Christ’s mediation. Whereas these glorious peculiarities of the evangelical revelation constitute the very substance of Charles Wesley’s verse. They cannot be expunged by a slight alteration in the phraseology. If these verities are excluded, the hymns in general are destroyed; and hence his compositions, notwithstanding their high and undeniable poetical merit, are seldom found in the devotional books of heterodox worshippers. * * *

“During the last fifty years few collections of hymns, designed for the use of evangelical congregations, have been made without a considerable number of his compositions, which are admired in proportion as the people are spiritually minded. His hymns are therefore extensively used in secret devotion, in family worship,

and in public religious assemblies. Every Sabbath-day myriads of voices are lifted up, and utter, in the hallowed strains which he has supplied, the feelings of penitence, of faith, of grateful love and joyous hope, with which the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, has inspired them; and are thus in a course of training for the more perfect worship of heaven. * * *

They are perfectly free from all sickly sentimentality, especially that which some modern poets affect, by a perpetual reference to consecrated places, sacred vestments, holy water, and the trumpery of Papal Rome; as if religion were a mere matter of the imagination, and Christians were still under the Jewish law. His hymns are as rational and manly in sentiment, as they are pure and elegant in composition. Their theology is thoroughly scriptural. * * *

No other hymns in the English language so fully exhibit those just views of apostolical Christianity, which the author and his brother were a means of reviving. All that these men of God taught in the pulpit, and that thousands of their spiritual children have experienced, the hymns adequately express. They assume that it is the common privilege of believers to enjoy the direct and abiding witness of their personal adoption; to be made free from sin by the sanctifying Spirit; to live and die in the conscious possession of that perfect love, which casteth out

fear; and they express a strong and irrepressible desire for these blessings, with the mighty faith by which they are obtained. Thus he teaches the mourning penitent to pray for pardon, and the peace of God which attends it—

‘ O that I could the blessing prove,
My heart’s extreme desire ;
Live happy in my Saviour’s love,
And in his arms expire !

* * * * *

In answer to ten thousand prayers,
Thou pardoning God, descend !
Number me with salvation’s heirs,
My sins and troubles end !

Nothing I ask or want beside,
Of all in earth or heaven,
But let me feel thy blood applied,
And live and die forgiven.’

“ In reference to the higher blessing of entire sanctification, he thus sings—

‘ Where the indubitable seal,
That ascertains the kingdom mine ?
The powerful stamp I long to feel,
The signature of love divine !
O shed it in my heart abroad,
Fulness of love, of heaven, of God !’

“ No man ever excelled him in expressing the power of faith—

'The thing surpasses all my thought;
But faithful is my Lord;
Through unbelief I stagger not,
For God hath spoke the word.

Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,
And looks to that alone;
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries, 'It shall be done.'

* * * * *

'My flesh which cries, 'It cannot be,'
Shall silence keep before the Lord:
And earth, and hell, and sin shall flee
At Jesu's everlasting word.'

"Great praise is due to the excellent Dr. Watts for the hymns with which he favoured the churches. Many of them are exceedingly beautiful and devotional. He had the honour too of taking the lead in this most important service; being the first of our poets that successfully applied his talents to such lyrical compositions as are adapted to the use and edification of Christian assemblies. But in the vehement language of the heart, in power of expression, in the variety of his metres, and in the general structure of his verse, he is not equal to Charles Wesley, any more than in richness of evangelical sentiment, and in deep religious experience. The doctor teaches Christians to sing with mixed emotions of desire, hope and doubt—

‘ *Could* we but climb where Moses stood,
 And view the landscape o’er,
 Not Jordan’s stream, nor death’s cold flood,
 Should fright us from the shore.’

Whereas Charles Wesley has attained the desired eminence, and thence triumphantly exclaims—

‘ The promised land, from Pisgah’s top,
 I now exult to see;
 My hope is full (O glorious hope!)
 Of immortality.’

“It is doubtful whether any human agency whatever has contributed more directly to form the character of the Methodist societies than the hymns of Charles Wesley, which they are constantly in the habit of singing, and with which their memories are richly charged. The sermons of the preachers, the instructions of the class-leaders, the prayers of the people, both in their families and social meetings, are all tinged with the sentiments and phraseology of his hymns. In his beautiful and expressive lines many of them are accustomed to give utterance to their desires and hopes, their sorrows and fears, their confidence and joy; and in innumerable instances they have expired with his verses upon their lips. * * * They have found his hymns and spiritual songs to breathe the very language of heaven; and they have only exchanged them for the song of Moses and of the Lamb.

“It is an important fact, that this gifted man, apparently without design, has anticipated all the wants of the Wesleyan Connexion, with respect to devotional poetry. He has supplied it with hymns adapted to every religious service, even missionary meetings, which were unknown in his time, and, strange as it may seem! even the ordination of ministers. He did indeed speak to the people in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, to their edification and comfort. In every place and at all times he ‘had a hymn, had a psalm.’ At funerals, at weddings, in the domestic circle, in the public congregation, at the table of the Lord, he was prepared to lead the devotions of those around him. When attended by immense multitudes in the open air, and under the wide canopy of heaven, he called upon them to sing with heart and voice—

‘Ye mountains and vales In praises abound;
Ye hills and ye dales Continue the sound:
Break forth into singing Ye trees of the wood,
For Jesus is bringing Lost sinners to God.’

“When assembled with his Christian friends in a tea-party, he attempted to stir up their pure minds, by calling upon them to join in this lively, and joyous strain—

‘How pleasant and sweet, In his name when we meet
Is his fruit to our spiritual taste!
We are banqueting here On angelical cheer,
And the joys that eternally last.

Invited by him, We drink of the stream
 Ever flowing in bliss from the throne :
 Who in Jesus believe, We the Spirit receive
 That proceeds from the Father and Son.

* * * * *

Come, Lord, from the skies, And command us to rise,
 Ready made for the mansions above ;
 With our Head to ascend, And eternity spend
 In a rapture of heavenly love.'

On the return of his wife's birth-day he invited
 her to join in the holy and joyous strain—

'Come away to the skies, My beloved, arise,
 And rejoice in the day thou wast born ;
 On this festival day, Come exulting away,
 And with singing to Sion return.

We have laid up our love And treasure above,
 Though our bodies continue below ;
 The redeemed of the Lord, We remember his word,
 And with singing to Paradise go.

* * * * *

With thanks we approve The design of thy love,
 Which hath join'd us in Jesus's name ;
 So united in heart, That we never can part,
 Till we meet at the feast of the Lamb.

There, there at his feet We shall suddenly meet,
 And be parted in body no more !
 We shall sing to our lyres, With the heavenly choirs,
 And our Saviour in glory adore.

Hallelujah we sing, To our Father and King,
And his rapturous praises repeat:
To the Lamb that was slain, Hallelujah again,
Sing all heaven, and fall at his feet!

In assurance of hope, We to Jesus look up,
Till his banner unfurled in the air
From our graves we shall see, And cry out, 'It is he!'
And fly up to acknowledge him there.'

"His heart overflowed with sacred verse, till it ceased to beat; and his tuneful voice was never silent till it was silenced in death. He is gone; but the imperishable fruit of his sanctified genius remains, as one of the richest legacies ever bequeathed to the church by her faithful sons." *

* From Jackson's Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley,
Vol. 2; Page 476, &c.

CHAPTER II.

ORIGINAL HYMN BOOK AS PUBLISHED BY MR. WESLEY
—ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS IN THE PRESENT
HYMN BOOK—TRANSLATIONS FROM THE GERMAN—
CLASSIFICATION OF THE HYMNS, ACCORDING TO
THEIR RESPECTIVE AUTHORS.

THE Collection of Hymns, for the use of the people called Methodists, as originally published by the Rev. John Wesley, was a duodecimo volume of 504 pages, exclusive of the Index, and contained 525 hymns.* Six of these however are in the present Hymn Book divided, and each of them counted as two; namely, Hymns 24 and 25, 140 and 141, 194 and 195, 348 and 349, 365 and 366, 391 and 392. If these had been thus divided and counted in the original hymn book, the number would have been 531. Of these, eleven are totally omitted, namely—

Hymn 37 — Saviour, if thy precious love
 Could be merited by mine.

Hymn 94 — Ah! foolish world forbear
 Thy unavailing pain.

* These observations are made on a copy of the Hymn Book, announced on the title page, as the Third Edition, Corrected, and published in London, 1782.

Hymn 107—Friend of sinners, in thy heart,
Tell me, doth there not remain.

Hymn 115—O thou, of whom I oft have heard,
Heard with the hearing of the ear.

Hymn 116—When my relief will most display
Thy glory in thy creature's good.

Hymn 143—Jesu, as taught by thee, I pray;
Preserve me, till I see thy light.

Hymn 230—O Lord our God, we bless thee now,
To thee our souls and bodies bow.

Hymn 244—Jesu, my Lord, my God,
The God supreme thou art.

Hymn 245—Jesus, thou art the mighty God,
The Child and Son, on us bestowed.

Hymn 249—The wisdom, owned by all thy sons,
To me, O God, impart.

Hymn 255—Thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Inexplicably one and three.

and one, Hymn 156 in the Original, has been transferred to the Supplement, where it now appears as Hymn 684. Deducting 12 from 531, we find there are in our present hymn book, exclusive of the Additional Hymns and the Supplement, 519 of those included in the original publication. To these have been added 21 others, making the total 540.* The following

* There are two distinct Hymns, both numbered 46; so that the entire number in the Volume is in reality one more than it appears to be; that is, in the body of the work 540; Hymn Book and Supplement 770.

are those which have been thus introduced ; Hymns 38, 39, 66, 90, 97, 107, 111, 119, 120, 143, 149, 162, 169, 213, 228, 253, 257, 263, 276, 490, 500.

On comparing the hymns omitted with those substituted for them, most persons will probably agree, that the alteration has been very much for the better. The hymns omitted, though by no means destitute of poetical merit, and superior indeed to many that have appeared in modern compilations, are generally below the standard of the Wesleyan compositions ; none of them certainly of any particular excellence. Whereas among the hymns substituted are several of very superior value ; some, as fine evangelical paraphrases of scripture passages (Hymns 90, 107, 111) ; some as being admirably adapted for public worship (Hymns 253, 257, 263) ; and some, as being beautifully descriptive of inward and experimental religion (Hymns 97, 143, 213, 228). Most of these 21 hymns indeed are in all respects so excellent, that the wonder is, how Mr. Wesley came to overlook or omit them, when preparing his standard collection for general use.

In the hymns which are retained in the present editions, a few verses are occasionally omitted ; but they are generally such as have but little to recommend them, or are objectionable on some ground or other. In Hymn 217, the second verse was :—

“ Soon as I find myself forsook,
The grace again is given ;
A sigh can reach thy heart ; a look
Can bring thee down from heaven.”

This was perhaps omitted because of the grammatical blunder in the first line—*forsook* instead of *forsaken*—but the thought in the third and fourth lines is very striking, and beautifully expressed.

Hymn 251 contained originally eight verses, of which three, namely verses 4, 7, 8 have been omitted. They used to stand thus :—

4. “ Thy righteousness our sins keep down,
Thy peace our passions bind ;
And let us, in thy joy unknown,
The first dominion find.
7. When shall we hear his trumpet sound,
The latest of the seven ?
Come, King of saints, with glory crowned,
The eternal God of heaven !
8. Judge of the anti-christian foe,
Appear on earth again ;
And then thy thousand years below,
Before thy ancients reign.”

The expression at the close of verse 4, *the first dominion*, though found in Holy Writ (Micah iv. 8) is obscure, and the propriety of its being thus applied is at least doubtful. Verses 7 and 8, though elegant and spirited in

composition, and fully accordant with the language of Scripture, are not so well adapted for general use; and would tend rather to encourage unprofitable speculations about unfulfilled prophecy, than to promote the edification of a promiscuous assembly.

In Hymn 284, one verse, the second, has been omitted; which stood thus:—

2. "I cannot see thy face, and live!
Then let me see thy face, and die!
Now, Lord, my gasping spirit receive;
Give me on eagles' wings to fly;
With eagles' eyes on thee to gaze,
And plunge into the glorious blaze."

This is poetry of a high order; but the language is too bold, vehement and impassioned, for common use.

Hymn 287 had originally a fifth verse, and one of considerable beauty, well worthy of being perpetuated:—

5. "Let me of thy life partake;
Thy own holiness impart;
O that I might sweetly wake,
With my Saviour in my heart!
O that I might know thee mine!
O that I might thee receive!
Only live the life divine,
Only to thy glory live!"

To the Moravian church and to the German language we are indebted for some of the most

beautiful and most valuable hymns that were ever written; especially for several of those descriptive of inward and experimental religion. The Moravians were of eminent use to the two Wesleys in the early part of their career, in leading them to correct and truly evangelical views on these most interesting subjects; and Mr. Wesley in his Journal mentions the great benefit which he derived from the sermons and conversations of Peter Bohler, Christian David, Michael Linner, and others. As the Moravians probably had among them, at that period, more of deep religious experience than any other people on the earth, their hymns partook of the same character, and were particularly rich in their exhibitions of evangelical truth, and in their descriptions of the work of God in the soul of the believer. Several of the choicest of them are incorporated in the Methodist collection.

It has generally been supposed that the translations from the German hymn book were made not by Charles Wesley, but by John. This is stated by the Rev. Thomas Jackson,* to have been the opinion of Miss Sarah Wesley; who was certainly more likely to know the facts of the case than any person unconnected with the family. But the Rev. Richard Watson has

* See Wesley's Works, third edition, 8vo. Vol. xiv., page 340.

expressed an opinion,* that these translations were made some by John Wesley, some by Charles; and that in many of them there is *internal evidence of Charles's manner*. Probably Mr. Watson is quite correct in stating, that *John's versions are generally more polished and elegant; Charles had more fire and was more careless*. And yet that even John, with all his characteristic calmness and sobriety, could sometimes feel and manifest something of poetic *fire*, is evident from the last two verses of Hymn 68, which is universally allowed to have been written by him. These two verses especially are in a very lively, spirited and impassioned strain, and conclude with the wish often expressed in the compositions of his brother Charles, that he might at once escape from the toils and sufferings of this life, and be admitted into the paradise of God. Mr. Watson thinks, that we have *no decisive evidence*, that the translations were all made by John. On that point the present writer takes leave to differ from that great and good man. We have decisive evidence from Mr. John Wesley's Journals, that he studied and understood the German language. On his voyage to America in 1735-36, he occasionally joined with the Germans in public worship. While at Frederica in Georgia, in 1736, he used

* See Watson's Life of the Rev. John Wesley, page 325.

to conduct a religious service in his own house, for the express benefit of those who did not understand English; on which occasions they first sang a hymn, then Mr. Wesley read and explained a chapter in the New Testament, then after singing a second hymn, they concluded with prayer; all in the German language. In August, 1738, Mr. Wesley spent nearly a fortnight at Herrnhut, in Germany, where he embraced every opportunity of attending the religious services of the Moravians, hearing the discourses of some of their eminent ministers, and conversing largely and freely with them; and all in the German language, unless when occasionally the Latin was employed, by way of explaining what he did not fully comprehend. These are facts which cannot be denied; and they prove that Mr. Wesley not only read and understood German works, but that he could even conduct divine worship and hold conversations in that language. Now we have *no evidence at all*, that Charles Wesley ever studied the German language, or that he ever read or understood any work written therein.

All the hymns translated from the German are to be found in the poetical works issued in the joint names of the two brothers, in 1739, 1740, 1743, 1745; during which period, unquestionably, John must still have had a familiar acquaintance with the language.

In his sermon "On knowing Christ after the flesh," Mr. Wesley, speaking of the Moravians, twenty-six in number, whom he met with in his voyage to America, says—"We not only contracted much esteem, but a strong affection for them. Every day we conversed with them, and consulted them on all occasions. I translated many of their hymns for the use of our own congregations. Indeed as I durst not implicitly follow any man, I did not take all that lay before me, but selected those which I judged to be most scriptural, and most suitable to sound experience. Yet I am not sure that I have taken sufficient care to pare off every improper word or expression." * Now Mr. Wesley frequently speaks of his brother's hymns, and his brother's poetry, and in referring to the various poetical publications which had appeared among the Methodists, he is always careful to associate his brother with himself. And if Mr. Charles Wesley had had any part in translating the German hymns, Mr. John Wesley's candour, accuracy and regard for truth would have prompted him to say so, and his language would have been—"My brother and I translated many of their hymns. As we durst not implicitly follow any man, we did not take all that lay before us," &c. But here he uses the singular number exclusively, and speaks of

* Wesley's Sermons, Sermon 117; Works, third edition, Vol. vii., page 293.

himself alone as being concerned in translating, judging, selecting, and paring off improper expressions. Taken in connexion with all the facts and circumstances of the case, the above-quoted passage of the sermon, appears to furnish sufficient and conclusive evidence, that the hymns from the German were all translated by John Wesley ; not by Charles.

It is a matter of some interest and importance to ascertain, as far as possible, those hymns in the Hymn Book and Supplement, which were *not* composed by Charles Wesley, and to assign them to their respective authors. This the writer has endeavoured to do ; and the following table will, it is hoped, be found accurate.

The following were composed by Dr. ISAAC WATTS:—

Hymn

- 12—Come, ye that love the Lord.
- 41—O God, our help in ages past.
- 42—Thee we adore, eternal Name.
- 213—My God, the spring of all my joys.
- 224—I'll praise my Maker, while I've breath.
- 225—Praise ye the Lord ! 'tis good to raise.
- 226—Eternal Wisdom ! thee we praise.
- 263—Father ! how wide thy glory shines.
- 316—Eternal Power, whose high abode.
- 540—Before Jehovah's awful throne.
- 541—Lord of the worlds above.

Hymn

- 553—He dies, the friend of sinners dies.
 568—God is a name my soul adores.
 569—The Lord Jehovah reigns.
 570—High in the heavens, eternal God.
 573—Come, sound his praise abroad.
 577—Great God, attend, while Sion sings.
 578—Sweet is the work, my God, my King.
 579—Great is the Lord, our God.
 581—Welcome, sweet day of rest.
 587—Let every tongue thy goodness speak.
 589—Sweet is the memory of thy grace.
 590—In all my vast concerns with thee.
 593—The Lord ! how wondrous are his ways.
 595—Plung'd in a gulf of dark despair.
 596—Who can describe the joys that rise.
 597—Great God ! indulge my humble claim.
 599—Begin, my soul, some heavenly theme.
 600—Jesus ! thou everlasting King.
 612—Behold ! the blind their sight receive.
 615—Not all the blood of beasts.
 620—Behold the sure foundation-stone.
 623—When I survey the wondrous cross.
 634—What equal honours shall we bring.
 636—Great God, whose universal sway.
 640—Come, let us join our cheerful songs.
 641—Join all the glorious names.
 646—With joy we meditate the grace.
 648—Let everlasting glories crown.

Hymn

- 652—Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove.
656—Why should the children of a King.
659—O thou that hear'st when sinners cry.
660—How sad our state by nature is.
664—Infinite Power, eternal Lord.
665—Long have I sat beneath the sound.
672—Awake, our souls! away, our fears!
676—Bless'd are the humble souls that see.
678—God is the refuge of his saints.
679—My Shepherd will supply my need.
680—Happy the heart where graces reign.
685—To God, the only wise.
695—Let Sion in her King rejoice.
697—Jesus shall reign, where'er the sun.
698—The heavens declare thy glory, Lord.
699—From all that dwell below the skies.
701—How beauteous are their feet.
702—Salvation! O the joyful sound!
716—Hear what the voice from heaven proclaims.
720—Why do we mourn departing friends.
721—And must this body die.
728—There is a land of pure delight.
730—Give me the wings of faith to rise.
738—How pleasant, how divinely fair.
741—How large the promise, how divine.
751—The promise of my Father's love.
769—I give immortal praise.

The following by Dr. PHILIP DODDRIDGE :—

Hymn

582—Lord of the Sabbath, hear our vows.

628—Ye humble souls, that seek the Lord.

651—Sovereign of all the worlds on high.

711—Eternal source of every joy.

714—God of my life, through all my days.

736—Great God, thy watchful care we bless.

739—Father of all, thy care we bless.

743—See Israel's gentle shepherd stand.

744—The Saviour, when to heaven he rose.

750—O happy day, that fix'd my choice.

By JOHN DRYDEN :—

564—Infinite God! to thee we raise.

565—Messiah! joy of every heart.

566—Saviour, we now rejoice in hope.

654—Creator, Spirit, by whose aid.

By JOSEPH ADDISON :—

223—When Israel out of Egypt came.

567—The spacious firmament on high.

592—When all thy mercies, O my God.

765—How are thy servants bless'd, O Lord.

By BISHOP KENN :—

757—Awake, my soul, and with the sun.

758—Glory to thee, my God, this night.

By BRADY and TATE :—

571—With glory clad, with strength arrayed.

584—O render thanks to God above.

Handwritten notes in the left margin:
 223—
 567—
 592—
 765—
 757—
 758—
 571—
 584—
 in God.

By the Rev. JAMES MERRICK :—

Hymn

585—Far as Creation's bounds extend.

By Dr. HENRY MORE :—

456—Father, if justly still we claim.

457—On all the earth thy Spirit shower.

Translated from the French, by JOHN BYROM.
A.M., F.R.S., commonly called Dr. BYROM :—

285—Come, Saviour, Jesus, from above.

By the Rev. SAMUEL WESLEY, Sen :—

22—Behold ! the Saviour of mankind.

By the Rev. SAMUEL WESLEY, Jun :—

46—The morning flowers display their sweets.

544—The Lord of Sabbath let us praise.

561—Hail, Father ! whose creating call.

601—Hail, God the Son ! in glory crowned.

613—From whence these dire portents around.

649—Hail, Holy Ghost ! Jehovah ! third.

By the Rev. JOHN WESLEY :—

4—Ho ! every one that thirsts, draw nigh.

68—How happy is the pilgrim's lot.

235—Father of all, whose powerful voice.

236—Son of thy Sire's eternal love.

237—Eternal, spotless Lamb of God.

Translated, by the Rev. JOHN WESLEY, from the
German :—

23—Extended on a cursed tree.

Hymn

26—I thirst, thou wounded Lamb of God.

38—O God, of good the unfathomed sea.

133—Jesus, whose glory's streaming rays.

Original by Wolfgang Christopher Dessler.

189—Now I have found the ground wherein.

190—Jesus, thy blood and righteousness.

Original by Count Zinzendorf.

196—Into thy gracious hands I fall.

210—Thee will I love, my strength, my tower.

240—O God, thou bottomless abyss.

241—Thou, true and only God, lead'st forth. }

Original by Dr. Breithaupt.

279—Shall I, for fear of feeble man.

338—Thou Lamb of God, thou prince of peace.

339—O thou, to whose all-searching sight.

344—Thou hidden love of God, whose height.

350—Holy Lamb, who thee receive.

353—O Jesu, source of calm repose.

373—Jesu, thy boundless love to me.

Original by Paul Gerhard.

431—O God, what offering shall I give.

492—What shall we offer our good Lord.

494—Lo! God is here! let us adore.

Original by Jan Van Stegen.

586—Eternal depth of love divine.

610—O God of gods, in whom combine.

* 1831.
Hymns
407 *

Hymn

673—Commit thou all thy griefs. }
 674—Give to the winds thy fears. }

Original by Paul Gerhard.

Translated, by the Rev. JOHN WESLEY, from
 the Spanish :—

437—O God, my God, my all thou art.

By WILLIAM COWPER :—

559—God moves in a mysterious way.

663—O for a closer walk with God.

By the Rev. AUGUSTUS M. TOPLADY :—

624—Rock of ages, cleft for me.

By the Rev. JOSEPH HART :—

588—This, this is the God we adore.

By the Rev. J. STENNETT :—

583—Again our weekly labours end.

By Miss ANNE STEELE :—

580—Great God, this hallowed day of thine.

722—Almighty Maker of my frame.

746—Father of mercies, in thy word.

By the Rev. THOMAS OLIVERS :—

66—Lo! he comes with clouds descending.

669—The God of Abraham praise.

670—Though nature's strength decay.

671—Before the great Three-One.

By the Rev. BENJAMIN RHODES :—

637—My heart and voice I raise.

638—Jerusalem divine.

By Mrs. AGNES BULMER :—

Hymn

737—Thou, who hast in Sion laid.

By the Rev. WILLIAM M. BUNTING :—

748—O God! how often hath thine ear.

There are two hymns, 560 and 647, the authors of which I have not been able to ascertain. Hymn 560, it is believed, never appeared in any book published by Mr. Wesley. Hymn 647 is found in the "Collection of Psalms and Hymns," published in the joint names of John and Charles Wesley; the *fourth* edition of which was printed in 1748. But that it was not the original composition of either of the brothers, is pretty certain; because the rhyming of the first and third lines is neglected. And among all the known productions of Charles Wesley, we have not a single stanza in which this defect exists; nor among those of John, except in two of his translated hymns (673, 674), which are partially defective.

There is some uncertainty about Hymn 653. The fourth and following verses are found in the early editions of the Hymns and Sacred Poems, published in the names of the two brothers, and may confidently be attributed to Charles Wesley; but the author of the first three verses is not known. They appear in a collection of Psalms and Hymns, published in 1800 by Robert Carr Brackenbury, Esq., and were possibly composed by that gentleman. Of Hymn 699 also it should

be stated, that the first and second verses are from Dr. Watts, and the fourth from Bishop Kenn; whence the third verse was taken, has not been ascertained.

It is highly probable that some few others of the hymns, besides the five enumerated above, were from the pen of John Wesley; but we have no means of ascertaining which they are; and in the absence of all satisfactory proof to the contrary, the only alternative is to assign all that remain unaffiliated, to Charles Wesley.

The Hymns in the Hymn Book and Supplement are numbered as 769; but there being two that are numbered 46, they are in reality 770. When classified according to their respective authors, they will stand thus—

Watts	.	.	66
Doddridge	.	.	10
Dryden	.	.	4
Addison	.	.	4
Kenn	.	.	2
Brady and Tate	.	.	2
Merrick	.	.	1
More	.	.	2
Byrom, from the French			1
Samuel Wesley, Sen.	.	.	1
Samuel Wesley, Jun.	.	.	6
John Wesley	.	.	5
Carried over	.	.	104

Brought over	104
Translated by John Wesley, from the German	24
Translated by Ditto from the Spanish	1
Cowper	2
Toplady	1
Hart	1
Stennett	1
Miss Steele	3
Olivers	4
Rhodes	2
Mrs. Bulmer	1
Bunting	1
Authors unknown	2
Charles Wesley	623
<hr/>	
Total . . .	770

Thus it appears, that to the sanctified talent of Charles Wesley, we are, under God, indebted for about 623 out of the 770 hymns, which constitute the collection now in use among the Methodists; or for nearly six-sevenths of the whole.

CHAPTER III.

EXCELLENCE OF THE WESLEYAN HYMNS, IN SENTIMENT.

WITH great propriety does Mr. Wesley, in the preface, speak of his Hymn Book, as being in effect, *a little body of experimental and practical divinity*. To establish and illustrate this point, will be the object of the present chapter.

Do we wish to have correct and scriptural views of the ever-blessed God, his glorious perfections, and the relations which he sustains to us? Where shall we find these things better stated, than in Hymns 38, 199, 223 to 226, 232 to 235, 238 to 245, 247 to 250, 263, 264, 316, 407, 540 to 543, 561, 563, 564, 567 to 574, 576, 584 to 593, 597, 598, 599, 669.

Or do we wish to dwell on the mystery of the Holy Trinity, and to discover the application and the importance of that fundamental doctrine? In these hymns not only is the doctrine distinctly avowed, but its intimate connexion with all inward and experimental religion is made apparent. Consult, on this subject, Hymns 221, 232, 237, 239, 251 to 262, 473, 476, 477, 506, 514, 515, 517, 532, 562, 564, 647, 649, 654, 671, 737, 745, 757, 769.

On the person character and work, sufferings and death of the Redeemer, his resurrection and ascension, his atonement and intercession, his kingdom and glory, nothing can be more appropriate or more instructive, than what is found in many of these hymns. There is indeed so large a proportion of them, in which these topics are taken up, that it would be superfluous to refer to them individually. Besides those on subjects directly connected with the Saviour (as Hymns 544 to 555, 600 to 648, 689 to 708), the introductory hymns in Part 1, those describing formal and inward religion in Part 2, the penitential hymns in Part 3 and in Section 4 of the Supplement, the hymns for believers in Part 4 and in Section 5 of the Supplement, and those for the Society in Part 5, are all more or less imbued with christian principles and sentiments. Well indeed might Charles Wesley have adopted as his motto, the first verse of his own beautiful paraphrase of Psalm xlv. (Hymn 639)—

“ My heart is full of Christ, and longs
 Its glorious matter to declare!
 Of him I make my loftier songs,
 I cannot from his praise forbear;
 My ready tongue makes haste to sing
 The glories of my heavenly King.”

Other men of fine taste and of good poetical talent might write elegant hymns or paraphrases of Psalms, celebrating the glorious perfections

of Jehovah, and ascribing to him the praise that is his due, without the slightest reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, or to the work of redemption, or to any topic that is distinctively Christian. Of this we have proof in Addison's noble paraphrase of that most sublime composition, Psalm cxiv.; which constitutes Hymn 223. But it may well be doubted, whether Charles Wesley could by any possibility have written a hymn on that plan. Whatever portion of the inspired volume he takes as the foundation of his sacred verse, he finds Christ there, or at least he builds upon it as none but a Christian could, so that Christian thoughts and feelings and principles are interwoven with the whole. While courting the muse, he could no more forget his Christianity, than he could forget his own human nature and his own individual existence. If he is paraphrasing Psalm xlviii. he tells us, on verse 14, (Hymn 563)—

“Sion's God is all our own
Who on his love rely;
We his pardoning love have known,
And live to Christ and die.”

On Psalm lxxxiv. verses 4, 5—describing those who are truly blessed or happy, he says,—
(Hymn 574)—

“Whose strength and confidence thou art,
Who feel thee, Saviour, in their heart,
The way, the truth, the life of grace.”

When his subject is Psalm lvii. verses 8 to 11, he concludes by saying—(Hymn 598)—

“All earth and heaven their King proclaim ;
Bow every knee to Jesu’s name !”

And when paraphrasing Psalm cxlvi. he thus illustrates the fine sayings in verse 8—(Hymn 576)—

“He sets the mournful prisoner free ;
He bids the blind their Saviour see.”

In these respects Charles Wesley is decidedly superior even to Watts. For though that excellent man avowedly made it his object to adapt the Psalms of David to the Christian state and worship, there are some of his best paraphrases, in which there is no more direct appearance of Christianity, than in the beautiful but unevangelical pieces of Addison. See, in proof of this, those fine paraphrases, Hymns 224, 225, 540, 541 ; all of which deservedly rank high among devotional compositions, and yet contain no reference whatever to the Redeemer of the world, or to his glorious work.

On the character, offices, and work of the Holy Spirit, we have abundant statements in Hymns 3, 6, 9, 10, 19, 21, 81, 85 to 89, 96, 97, 107, 121, 131, 134, 144, 161, 165, 182, 219, 220, 236, 249, 253, 255, 258, 294, 307, 312, 326, 351, 364, 367, 374, 376, 377, 390, 391, 408, 413, 418, 423, 435, 438, 456, 457, 476, 477, 506, 514, 515, 530, 547, 550, 649 to 658, 659, 769.

How strikingly are the depravity and guilt, the danger and helplessness of fallen man set forth in Hymns 81 to 85, 91 to 94, 99 to 188, 290, 308 to 311, 382, 388, 647, 659 to 667, 768.

The glorious provisions of redeeming mercy on behalf of the whole human race are set forth in the most encouraging way, and all persons without exception are invited to come and partake freely of pardon and salvation, through the merit, atonement and intercession of Christ Jesus. On these points the Wesleyan creed has a great advantage over that of the Calvinist; for the Wesleyan, without any mental reserve, can honestly and sincerely invite all his fellow-creatures, even the vilest and the worst, to come and share in the blessings procured through the meritorious undertakings of the Son of God. And of this advantage the bard of Methodism has fully availed himself; as may be seen in Hymns 1 to 10, 20, 28 to 35, 37, 39, 86, 118, 129, 142, 162, 190, 197, 199, 206, 208, 215, 216, 236, 245, 250 to 253, 257, 365, 378, 435, 438, 439, 440, 444, 445, 451, 463, 602, 606, 614, 616, 632, 642, 645, 691 to 694, 696, 700, 703 to 705, 737.

The duty of repentance is admirably illustrated and its necessity shewn in Hymns 99 to 181, 659, 660, 666, 668. These hymns exhibit not only that repentance, which precedes the pardon of sin, and which may be called the repentance of the sinner; but that also which is subsequent

to our attainment of pardon, and which may be called the repentance of the believer. See Hymns 182 to 188, 274, 289, 290, 661 to 665, 667.

The great duty of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is presented to our view and its necessity strongly enforced, in many of the hymns; particularly Hymns 1, 3, 13, 20, 28, 30, 36, 83, 85, 95, 118, 148, 150, 162, 189, 190, 192, 196, 213, 217, 267, 269, 277, 278, 314, 342, 356, 357, 360, 380, 401, 410, 439, 521, 545, 558, 616, 622, 660, 666, 677, 682, 683, 718, 752, 753, 754, 759.

As to the privileges of true believers—the removal of guilt, the conscious possession of pardon, the witness of God's Spirit bearing witness with our spirit, that we are his children, the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us, the peace, consolation and joy that flow into the soul of the believer, and the glorious hope of eternal life which dwells within him—these subjects are so admirably elucidated, that Wesley's hymns are in these matters above all praise, and there are but few hymns of other writers, that will bear any comparison with them. See, among others, Hymns 1, 3, 5, 9, 12 to 21, 26 to 34, 37, 40, 57, 58, 65, 66, 67 to 79, 189 to 217, 219, 221, 222, 224, 227 to 231, 246, 249, 252, 261, 262, 263, 269, 271 to 275, 281 to 285, 287, 292, 321 to 328, 333, 335 to 339, 418 to 438, 488 to 500, 505 to

532, 535 to 539, 540 to 543, 556, 557, 558, 621 to 627, 633, 644, 651, 655 to 658, 669 to 688, 712 to 715, 733, 734, 735, 761 to 764, 766, 767.

The hymns for persons seeking full redemption, Hymns 340 to 417, form a large and very important class. In them the doctrine of Christian perfection or entire holiness is placed in its true light, exhibited in a variety of aspects, established on a scriptural foundation, guarded against misapprehension and abuse, and held forth as the undoubted privilege of believers. Scarcely any reasonable question can be asked relative to the doctrine, which might not be answered by referring to some of these hymns. What is Christian perfection, but the fulfilment in the largest sense, of that ancient promise—*A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you?* And should it be asked, what kind of a heart is it that is here promised, and that we ought to seek; where can we find a more appropriate, a more comprehensive answer, than in Hymn 341, verses 3, 4; Hymn 343, verses 1, 2, 3, 4, 8; Hymn 351, verses 4, 5, 7; Hymn 391, verses 4, 5. What adds greatly to the value of these poetical illustrations of the subject is, that they are so thoroughly scriptural: not only every sentiment, but every mode of phraseology, and almost every single word of any prominence has the direct sanction of inspiration. So admirably did this Christian poet avail himself of

the very *words, which the Holy Ghost teacheth*. What can possibly be more full, more expressive, more correct, more comprehensive, or more completely scriptural, than such lines as these,—

“ A heart resign’d, submissive, meek,
My great Redeemer’s throne ;
Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone.

“ An humble, lowly, contrite heart,
Believing, true, and clean ;
Which neither life nor death can part
From him that dwells within.

“ A heart in every thought renew’d,
And full of love divine ;
Perfect, and right, and pure, and good,
A copy, Lord, of thine !

“ Let earth no more my heart divide ;
With Christ may I be crucified,
To thee with my whole soul aspire !

“ Let all my hallowed heart be love,
And all my spotless life be praise ! ”

What is Christian perfection, but perfect love dwelling in the heart and regulating the life ; supreme love to God, connected with universal benevolence to man ? And where is this love better described, than in Hymn 350, verses 3, 7 ; Hymn 361, verses 1, 4, 5, 6, 11 ; Hymn 389, verses

1, 3; Hymn 390, verses 1, 2; Hymns 354, 373, 378, 379, 385.

They who erroneously imagine that the doctrine of entire holiness is unfavourable to humility and tends to cherish our natural pride, may find an ample refutation of that opinion in Hymns, 302, 369, 381, 393, 398, 425. Here they will learn that deep humility is an essential ingredient of Christian perfection, and that the farther we advance in such perfection, the more humble we become.

If this state of religious experience be regarded as implying the most eminent degrees of meekness, patience, gentleness, spirituality and heavenly-mindness, where can we find these better described than in Hymn 341, verse 4; Hymn 351, verses 4, 5, 7; Hymn 353, verses 4, 5, 6; Hymn 355, verses 5, 6, 7; Hymn 366, verse 1; Hymn 373, verse 7; Hymns 429, 430, 431.

On these great and important topics, Wesley's hymns are eminent beyond all others. There are many hymns by other writers, which possess some degree of excellence, but which inculcate low views of Christian privileges and encourage the professed disciple of the Lord Jesus to rest contented with a very scanty and defective experience of religion. But it is one of the distinguishing glories of these hymns, that they tend greatly to enlarge and exalt our views as to the extent of the salvation of the gospel, and

that they stimulate and encourage us to seek high degrees of holiness. Some expressions, it is true, need a little qualification : otherwise they would fix the standard of Christian experience too high, and would represent the mature Christian as raised above those feelings and fears, those troubles and sorrows, which are inseparable from fallen humanity, and which are by no means incompatible with supreme love to God and entire holiness. Thus when the poet speaks of

“ —————the glorious liberty,
From sorrow, fear and sin ” (Hymn 367.)

When addressing Divine Love, he says—

“ All pain before thy presence flies ;
Care, anguish, sorrow, melt away,
Where ’er thy healing beams arise ”
(Hymn 373.)

Or again—

“ From sin and sorrow set me free ” (Hymn 379.)

Or—

“ Give me a new, a perfect heart,
From doubt and fear and sorrow free ”
(Hymn 391.)

In these and such like passages we must bear in mind the important distinction between sin and fear, between sin and sorrow. We should ever recollect, that there is a fear and a sorrow entirely unconnected with sin ; for he who *knew*

no sin, had his *fears* and his *sorrows*. If these expressions be regarded as denoting only such fears and sorrows as result from the remains of indwelling sin, they may be allowed and vindicated; but not otherwise.

With this qualification, the two sections, comprising Hymns 340 to 417, and 418 to 440, are instructive and edifying in the highest degree. They exhibit to our view the lengths and breadths, the depths and heights of Christian experience, the full efficacy of the Redeemer's blood in cleansing us from all sin, inward as well as outward, and the utmost power of the Holy Ghost in the believer's heart, destroying inbred sin, and filling him with love, with heaven, with God.

As to practical piety, comprehending all those good works by which the Christian is to shew his faith, and which God has before ordained that we should walk in them, how admirably is it set forth and inculcated in Hymns 318 to 328, 420, 424, 426 to 432, 492, 511, 512, 519 to 522, 526, 529, 530, 539.

On the all-important subjects of death, judgment and the future state, nothing can be more solemn, more appropriate or more impressive, than Hymns 41 to 52, 54 to 66, 717, 721, 722, 728, 729.

On the awful topic of infernal woe we have only one hymn, 80; and only half of this hymn

properly answers to the title, as being descriptive of hell. For in verse 4, the person who utters this solemn and affecting soliloquy, as though terrified in contemplating the final doom of the impenitent sinner, turns aside from such a scene, resolves to improve the reprieve granted to him, to accept of offered mercy, and to surrender his heart to God; and he concludes by expressing a hope that he shall live with God in heaven. Everlasting torment was a subject on which the poet could not delight to dwell.

But, in speaking of the blessedness of the heavenly world, he is copious and forcible, eloquent and sublime. Among all the delightful verses that have been composed on the future glory and felicity of the saints of God, where can we find any to rival the elegant and impassioned productions of Charles Wesley? On these subjects indeed Watts and Doddridge have written well; the former in Hymns 716, 720, 721, 728; the latter in Hymn 714; but these, however excellent, must yield the palm to Hymns 49 to 53, 57, 58, 66 to 79, 333, 386, 718, 724 to 727 733, 734, 735.

In short there is no important topic, connected either with Christian theology, with religious experience, or with practical godliness, which is not brought forward more or less in these hymns, and presented to our notice in a way, eminently calculated to make a deep and permanent im-

pression. And throughout the whole volume we find not a single line or expression of a licentious tendency; not the least countenance either for pharisaic or antinomian delusions. Neither they who would trust in their own supposed merit and good works, nor they who would make faith in Christ an excuse for indolence and sin, can find any encouragement here.

Had a person no book whatever in his possession excepting the Methodist Hymn Book, he might unquestionably learn from it the way of salvation; he could not imbibe from it any material or ruinous error; but taking it for his guide, he would be led into the way of repentance towards God, of faith in Jesus Christ, of supreme love to God, of universal benevolence to man, and of uniform and persevering obedience to the divine commands. Thus would he realize salvation and holiness here on earth, and thus would he be prepared for the glories of paradise and heaven hereafter. This might indeed be affirmed with truth of Watts's hymns, and of other evangelical collections besides that of Wesley. Between Wesley's collection and any other compilation not thoroughly and decidedly evangelical, no comparison will here be made: the absence of evangelical sentiment being an unpardonable defect. But in many volumes, which in this respect are unobjectionable, we find the standard of Christian experience fixed

far too low ; a very meagre and unsatisfactory state in religious matters is held out as safe and secure, and a high degree of holiness, or an entire salvation from sin is represented as unattainable and unnecessary. In one of Cowper's hymns we have the following verse,—

“ But though the poison lurks within,
 Hope bids me still with patience wait,
 Till death shall set me free from sin,
 Free from the only thing I hate.”

So then, according to this scheme, there is not sufficient efficacy in the blood of Christ to cleanse us from all sin, nor is the power of the Holy Ghost in the believer's heart sufficient to destroy the inward foe : but what is too difficult for the Almighty Saviour and for the Eternal Spirit, is to be accomplished by death. How discouraging, how injurious is this opinion ! and how much at variance with those scriptural declarations, in which the Christian believer is represented as *free from sin*, as *dead unto sin*, as *free from the law of sin and death*, as having *the body of sin destroyed*. To refer to another hymn, which was composed by that good and useful man, the Rev. John Newton, and which with many is a great favourite.

“ 'Tis a point I long to know ;
 Oft it causes anxious thought ;
 Do I love the Lord, or no ?
 Am I his, or am I not ? ”

Now what kind of religious experience is it that is described in this hymn? It is not adapted to the state of a penitent sinner, who feels the wrath of God abiding on him, but is earnestly seeking redemption in the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of all his sin. Such a person knows that as yet he does not love God; for he is under the influence of guilty and tormenting fear. He knows that he is not yet a child of God, through faith in the Lord Jesus. These blessings he is seeking, but has not yet obtained. On the other hand, this hymn is not adapted to the true believer; for such an one has the love of God shed abroad in his heart, and has the witness of the Spirit within, bearing witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God. Nor is it suitable to the careless and impenitent sinner; for of his state surely no reasonable doubt can be entertained. He does not love God; for his carnal mind is enmity against God; he is not a child of God; for he that committeth sin is of the devil. Then what kind of persons are they, whose case is here described? If Christians at all, they must be Christians of a very low order; persons who have not yet reached the character of even babes in Christ; persons in whom sin and grace are still striving for the ascendancy, and it is yet undecided which will prevail; persons who have some degree of divine light, but have not followed the Saviour

fully. They have sustained spiritual loss, and are to be regarded as backsliders in heart, if not as open and entire apostates. Their state may correspond with what we find in Hymns 663, 664, 652 verse 2, and with the section for persons convinced of backsliding, Hymns 168 to 182; but we should be aware that such a state is neither comfortable nor safe; and they to whom it actually belongs should be urged not to rest satisfied with it, but to strive and pray that they may speedily emerge out of it, and rise into a better and happier experience. Whereas there is in these hymns every thing that is calculated to lead us onward into high degrees of holiness, wisdom and usefulness on earth, and thus to prepare us for exalted mansions in the abodes of heavenly bliss.

The Wesleyan hymns are also free from those mystical sentiments, which obscure the glory and diminish the efficacy of the gospel of Christ; which would teach that a mournful and melancholy experience is preferable to comfort and joy, and that we must of necessity go on sorrowing and groaning all our days, till death comes to our release. These opinions indeed were adopted by the two brothers at the commencement of their religious career, but were abandoned by both, when in 1738 they were brought into the enjoyment of Christian liberty. Charles Wesley however appears to have again imbibed

somewhat that was mystical, and it is to be met with occasionally in some of his later compositions. But little or nothing of that kind is to be found in the present Hymn Book. It contains indeed one fine hymn of a very melancholy cast; probably the most melancholy in the whole collection—(Hymn 154.) In verse 1 the person speaking says of himself, as the hymn originally stood—

“Doubtful, and insecure of bliss;
Since death alone confirms me his.”

But John Wesley, in adopting the hymn into his collection, was careful to substitute *faith* for *death*, and this gives the whole an evangelical character. And here we discover one very material point of difference between the true system of the gospel; and those mystical or pharisaical systems, which diverge from it more or less. What the one attributes to death, the other expects to be accomplished through faith in the almighty Redeemer. What the one system puts off to a future and undefined period, the other teaches us to expect now, at once. Burdens, which, according to one scheme we must continue to bear as long as we live, may according to the other, be promptly removed. It is not *death*, but *faith* in the Lord Jesus Christ, that effects the wonderful change.

These hymns embody a complete system of evangelical theology, wholly free from Calvinistic

alloy ; and to this circumstance, as well as to the superior poetical abilities of Charles Wesley, they are mainly indebted for their excellence. The more prominent the peculiar opinions of Calvin are in any religious compositions, whether in prose or verse, the less are such compositions calculated to make men holy, happy, and useful ; and those writings from which such peculiar opinions are totally excluded, are likely to answer these valuable purposes in the highest degree.

CHAPTER IV.

EXCELLENCE OF THE HYMNS IN LANGUAGE, AND AS
POETICAL COMPOSITIONS—ALTERATIONS MADE BY
VARIOUS COMPILERS, IN WESLEY'S HYMNS—
SPECIMENS OF TRUE SUBLIMITY.

HERE we may again advert to the language of the venerable founder of Methodism, in the Preface to his Hymn Book. The excellence of the poetry he there describes, first, negatively, shewing what is *not* to be found in it; and then, positively, shewing what it does contain and exhibit. Among the former he mentions *doggerel—botches—patches—feeble expletives—* that which is *turgid* and *bombastic*—that which is *low* and *creeping—cant expressions—words without meaning*. It would be easy to exemplify each of these defects, by reference to Hymn Books which have been published at various times, and some of which are still extant. Mr. Wesley in his Preface to the “Pocket Hymn Book” which he published in 1787, mentions two hymns, which had become very popular with certain persons—one beginning,

“The despised Nazarene,”

the other,

“A Christ I have; O what a Christ have I!”

And there are other hymns, which might fairly be classed with these two: but let all such be consigned to merited oblivion.

There are several other hymns, which although they never found a place in the general collection, in use among the Methodists, have at various times obtained a partial and temporary popularity in many congregations. Among these candidates for public favour may be mentioned the following—

“Haste again, ye days of grace.”

“Hark! how the gospel trumpet sounds!”

“Come, Angels! seize your harps of gold.”

“Our souls by love together knit.”

“The voice of free grace Cries, Escape to the mountain.”

It may be admitted that these and some others of the same kind are generally unexceptionable in sentiment, and tolerable as to their poetical character; quite equal indeed to many that have been freely adopted in modern compilations: but they are decidedly below the rank of the Wesleyan hymns. It is greatly to be desired that Christian congregations should, in these matters, cultivate a correct and delicate taste. Let them uniformly encourage that chaste and simple, yet solemn and dignified style of composition, which best accords with the worship of the ever blessed God—with the noblest employment of redeemed and immortal creatures.

It will be a more agreeable task to prove that this volume exhibits (to employ again Mr. Wesley's language in the preface) *the purity, the strength and the elegance of the English language, together with the utmost simplicity and plainness, suited to every capacity*; and not only so, but also *the true spirit of poetry, such as cannot be acquired by art and labour, but must be the gift of nature.*

One excellence in Charles Wesley's poetry is, that he has never in any instance neglected the rhyme in the third line of a stanza, but has always made the third line to rhyme either with the first or with the fourth. No where do we find in any of his hymns a line, that does not rhyme with some other line. Though some eminent writers of a former day produced hymns on this plan, and hymns of some excellence, their practice is not to be commended; and the partial absence of rhyme in a hymn is in most cases an indication either of inferior talent, or of slovenly and careless composition. Some of Charles Wesley's rhymes, it is true, are not pure and perfect; so that a delicate ear is not satisfied with them: but in no single instance has he entirely neglected the rhyme. When the supplement to the Wesleyan Hymn Book was under consideration in the Book Committee, it was strongly recommended by some, and among others by the writer of these remarks, that no

hymn should be admitted, in which the rhyming of the first and third lines was neglected. But it was observed, in reply to this recommendation, that some hymns of that description had been inserted by Mr. Wesley in the Morning Hymn Book, prepared and published by him for the London congregations: and on this ground it was finally resolved to admit a few. Perhaps it is owing to this circumstance, that the supplement—excellent as many of the hymns unquestionably are—is yet, as a whole, inferior to the old hymn book. Were all those hymns expunged from the supplement, there are scarcely more than two, whose loss could be justly regretted. These two are Hymns 673, 674; in some stanzas of which, not in all, the rhyme is defective; but the sentiments are so admirable, and the diction is so appropriate and so striking, that almost every one would be sorry to lose them. But if Hymns 569, 592, 595, 628, 641, 647, 660, 672, 685, 701, 743, 751, 765, 769, were excluded, their places might easily be supplied by other hymns, fully equal to them in sentiment, and superior in poetical merit.

Another advantage that we have in Wesley's hymns is, that they contain so large a variety of metres, considerably more than twenty; and by this variety they are the better adapted to all the diversified purposes to which there is any occasion to apply them. Some are as solemn as

the grave; as solemn as the awful subjects of death and eternity require. Others are not only cheerful, but joyous and triumphant; so that in making them our own, we assimilate ourselves to the glorified companies in the heavenly world. And yet the good taste and sound judgment of John Wesley would not allow him to insert in his collection a specimen of *every* metre in which his brother had written. Among Charles Wesley's hymns are several of this peculiar metre—

“O how sweet it is to languish
For our God Till his blood
Eases all our anguish.”

“Blest we are in expectation
Of the bliss Power and peace
Pardon and salvation.”

This stanza, comprising only four lines, the first of eight syllables, the second and third each three, and the fourth six syllables, is deficient in dignity and solemnity. Two lines out of four being so very short, only three syllables each, the recurrence of the rhyme after so very small an interval gives the whole too much of a jingling sound, and renders the metre decidedly ineligible. Hence all those hymns were judiciously excluded from the general Hymn Book.

Some modern hymns are objectionable on this ground. One inserted in various collections, begins thus—

“Ah! I shall soon be dying”——

where the shortness of the line, the uncommonness of the metre, and the double rhyme at the end, all contribute to make it unsuitable for so solemn a subject.

The chasteness and elegance of diction observable in Wesley's hymns, distinguish them from many others. The application of the term *dear* to the Lord Jesus Christ has been justly objected to, as savouring of irreverence, as intimating too high a degree of familiarity, as being too common, too low, too colloquial to be applied to a being of such pre-eminent dignity, and as having no sanction at all in the language of Holy Scripture. The general Hymn Book does indeed furnish some instances of the use of this word; for we have such lines as the following—

“O thou dear, suffering Son of God.”

“That dear, disfigured face.”

“Jesus, dear, redeeming Lord.”

“The dear, triumphant Lamb.”

“To thy dear Redeemer's breast.”

But with a few exceptions, the word *dear* is scarcely to be found even in the most fervent and impassioned hymns of Charles Wesley. With all the depth and force of feeling, which experimental religion cherishes, with all the sentiments of admiration, gratitude and love with which we ought to be animated towards the Redeemer, there should ever be a due mixture of reverence and solemnity; and the impress of this ought to

be on all our devotional exercises. Now in this poetry, notwithstanding the strong, bold, and even startling expressions, which sometimes occur, such as—

“To urge our *God-commanding* plea.”

“Bless me; for I *will* prevail”—

there is nothing low, nothing vulgar, nothing offensive to correct judgment and good taste, nothing of that familiar and colloquial style, which we may employ with our fellow-creatures, but which is so unbecoming in our intercourse with the glorious Creator. Whereas in other hymns not only is the word *dear* of very frequent occurrence in such expressions as *Dear Lord*, *Dear Saviour*, *Dear Redeemer*, *Dear Jesus*; but other modes of speech are adopted, which are still stronger, more remote from the phraseology of Scripture, and therefore more objectionable. The following are specimens—

“To embrace my dearest Lord.”

“Bless’d be the Lamb, my dearest Lord.”

“There the dear Man, my Saviour, sits.”

“Dear God, let all my hours be thine.”

“Dear, glorious Man, that died for me.”

In a German Hymn Book, published at Leipsig in 1763, and used among the Moravians, are the following among many similar expressions.

Ich küsse dich, mein Seelen freund—

“I kiss thee, my soul’s friend.”

Ach küsse mich, mein Brautigam—

“Ah! kiss me, my Bridegroom.”

O lieber Gott, dich loben wir—

“O dear God, we praise thee.”

Auf dich, mein lieber Gott, ich traue—

“In thee, my dear God, I trust.”

Komm, mein Liebster, lasz dich küssen—

“Come, my dearest, let me kiss thee.”

Besides, Liebster Vater—Liebster Heiland—Liebster Gott—“Dearest Father”—“Dearest Saviour”—“Dearest God”—and the like. There are two instances in which the *kiss* is introduced by Charles Wesley; but in the first it is only *kissing the feet* of the Redeemer, and is founded on the interesting narrative of the pardoned sinner, who did actually testify her gratitude to the Saviour by kissing his feet, washing them with her tears, and wiping them with the hairs of her head—Hymn 33, v. 4.—

“O let me kiss thy bleeding feet,

And bathe and wash them with my tears.”

But this differs very widely from the ordinary way in which one relative or friend kisses another, and strongly intimates our great inferiority to him whom we thus salute. The other instance is in verse 6 of Hymn 229—a beautiful birth-day hymn—

“Like Moses to thyself convey,

And kiss my raptur’d soul away.”

This bold and singular idea is founded on a Jewish tradition, relative to the death of that eminent man. We read (Deut. xxxiv., 5) that Moses died *according to the word of the Lord*, or literally, from the Hebrew, *at the mouth of Jehovah*; which by some of the Jewish rabbins is interpreted as meaning, that God drew the soul or spirit of Moses out of his body with a kiss. Thus these hymns tend to raise us from that which is low and childish to that which is manly and elevated; they are calculated not only to warm our devotions, but to improve and refine our thoughts and our expressions.

While speaking of the purity of the language employed in the Wesleyan hymns, a few words may be said relative to some expressions and modes of speech, which in Mr. Wesley's day were scarcely known or allowed to be inaccurate, but which are now universally condemned and avoided by good writers and speakers. Such is the use of the imperfect tense of certain verbs instead of the participle, or of the participle instead of the imperfect tense. Thus in the lines—

“And glory end what grace begun.”—Hymns 196, 236.

“When he first the work begun.”—Hymn 218.

instead of the participle *begun*, we ought to have the imperfect tense *began*.

In the lines—

“Thou my pain my curse hast took.”—Hymn 27.

“The Sun of righteousness on me hath rose.” &c.—
Hymn 141.

“Who my cause hath undertook.”—Hymn 243.

“But hast thou finally forsook.”—Hymn 451.

instead of the imperfect tenses, *took*, *rose*, *undertook*, and *forsook*, the participles *taken*, *risen*, *undertaken*, and *forsaken* are required.

The last line of Hymn 427 originally stood thus—

“Still be wrote upon our heart ”

which in all the late editions has very properly been altered thus—

“Still be written on our heart.”

At the close of verse 1 of that very fine and noble composition, Hymn 226, the singular verb *rings* is employed, as though it agreed exclusively with the noun *palace*—

“And heaven’s high palace rings.”

Whereas there are three other nominatives, all plurals, preceding that verb—*rocks*, *hills*, *seas*—and the verb ought unquestionably to be plural—*ring*.

In verse 5 of Hymn 9, we have the following lines—

“The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
Is ready, with their shining host.”

Now although Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one God, they are *not* one *person*; and the use of a singular verb after two or three of the

persons of the Godhead is not sanctioned by the phraseology of Scripture. We read—"these three *are* one"—"these three *agree* in one"—"I and my Father *are* one"—"My Father will love him, and *we will come* unto him, and *make* our abode with him." In all these instances we have plural verbs, and propriety of language requires us to say in this case—

"The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
Are ready."

Besides in the very same line, the poet employs the plural pronoun *their*. If it be right to speak of the three divine persons in the singular number, let the singular pronoun *his* be employed, and let us read—

"Is ready, with *his* shining host,"

but to use a singular verb, and then a plural pronoun in the same line, and with precisely the same reference, is certainly indefensible.

These however are trivial blemishes, and are not at all to be wondered at; for similar errors are found in the best writers of that day. The peculiarities and niceties of our language had not then been minutely investigated, or subjected to grammatical control; and no work existed, that was worthy of the name of an English Grammar. The first edition of Lindley Murray's Grammar did not appear till some years after Mr. Wesley's death.

While Mr. Wesley cautioned those who might be disposed to reprint his brother's or his own hymns against all attempts to mend them, it must be granted that he made several alterations in those hymns which he adopted from others. It may appear unreasonable, that he should deny to others that liberty in reference to his own hymns, which he unquestionably took with those of others. Let it be observed however, that the compositions of other writers embodied in the Hymn Book, as originally published, were but a very small proportion of the whole; being only twelve hymns out of five hundred and thirty-one. And among all those, who in their collections have made free with Wesley's hymns, perhaps there has not been one, with the exception of Montgomery, whose poetical taste and judgment could be considered any thing like on a par with those of John Wesley.

If we compare the originals with the hymns as altered in the Wesleyan collection, we shall find that the alterations do not affect the sentiment, but merely make the language more correct, more chaste, more elegant, more poetical; and scarcely any one will hesitate to admit, that the alteration is a decided improvement.

WATTS's Original—

“ Nations, attend before his throne,
With solemn fear, with sacred joy.”

Altered by WESLEY—

“Before Jehovah’s awful throne,
Ye nations, bow with sacred joy.”

WATTS—

“The God that rules on high,
And thunders, when he please,
That rides upon the stormy sky,
And manages the seas.”

Altered by WESLEY—

“The God that rules on high,
That all the earth surveys,
That rides upon the stormy sky,
And calms the roaring seas.”

WATTS—

“While Jesus shews his heart is mine,
And whispers I am his.”

Altered by WESLEY—

“If Jesus shews his mercy mine,
And whispers I am his.”

WATTS—

“Run up with joy the shining way,
To embrace my dearest Lord.”

Altered by WESLEY—

“Run up with joy the shining way,
To see and praise my Lord.”

WATTS—

“I’ll praise my Maker with my breath.”

Altered by WESLEY—

“I’ll praise my Maker, while I’ve breath.”

WATTS—

“The Lord hath eyes to give the blind.”

Altered by WESLEY—

“The Lord pours eye-sight on the blind.”

WATTS—

“He dies, the heavenly lover dies!
The tidings strike a doleful sound
On my poor heart strings : deep he lies
In the cold caverns of the ground.”

Altered by WESLEY—

“He dies, the Friend of sinners dies!
Lo ! Salem’s daughters weep around!
A solemn darkness veils the skies;
A sudden trembling shakes the ground.”

WATTS—

“One day amidst the place
Where my dear God hath been.”

Altered by WESLEY—

“One day amidst the place
Where thou, my Lord, hast been.”

But the alterations, made by many compilers and editors in the Wesleyan hymns, often affect the sense materially, without improving the poetry. They tend to obscure or to keep out of view some great scriptural truth ; such as the unlimited provisions of the gospel, the universality of the

atonement effected by Jesus Christ, or the full extent of the salvation which is offered to every true believer. Thus in Hymn 606, that line

“Come, thou universal Saviour”—

is altered by some thus—

“Come, thou dear, exalted Saviour”—

by some—

“Come, thou Advocate and Saviour”—

by others—

“Come, thou kind and tender Saviour.”

In Hymn 645—

“Extol the Lamb of God,
The all-atoning Lamb.”

the second line is altered into “The sin-atoning Lamb”—which is tautology ; for there is nothing but sin, that needs an atonement ; nothing but sin, for which an atonement can be made. If the Lord Jesus be an atoning Lamb, to state that he is a Lamb atoning for sin, is a mere truism ; but whether that atonement is made for some or for all, is a question of the deepest importance ; which our poet decides agreeably to the positive declarations of Holy Scripture, by calling Christ the *all-atoning* Lamb, that is, the Lamb who has atoned for all.

In Hymn 34, verse 1—

“To adore the all-atoning Lamb,
And bless the sound of Jesu’s name”—

is thus altered—

“To fall before the atoning Lamb,
And praise the blessed Jesu’s name.”

Verses 6, 7, which so nobly and so boldly state the redemption of all mankind, have been thus altered, to meet the views of the disciples of Calvin—

“O unexampled love! O rich, redeeming grace!
How swiftly didst thou move To save a fallen race!
How shall we make the tidings known
Of what thy love, thy grace has done?”

“O for a trumpet-voice On all the world to call!
To bid their hearts rejoice In him who died for all!
Let each the joyful news proclaim,
Till every sinner hears his name.”

Wesley, in teaching us to pray for the conversion of the Jews, Hymn 451, puts these words into our mouths—they are an address to the Redeemer—

“Receive thy ancient people home;
That, quickened by thy dying love,
The world may their reception find,
Life from the dead for all mankind.”

But many persons, unable or unwilling to contemplate the glorious objects presented to us in the inspired volume—the salvation of all Israel, the gathering in of the fulness of the gentiles, and the universal establishment of christianity—have softened down the last two lines, thus—

“The world may their reception view,
And shout to God the glory due.”

Many persons, averse to the scriptural doctrine of entire sanctification, if they venture to adopt any hymn from "Section 7—For those who are seeking full redemption" are careful to expunge or alter every expression not in accordance with their own opinions. It is almost ludicrous to observe the great care, with which some of them avoid the scriptural word *perfect*. When Wesley says, Hymn 385—

"Pray and praise thee, without ceasing,
Glory in thy perfect love:"—

the last line at all events must be altered. In some books it appears thus—

"Glory in thy precious love:"—

in others—

"Triumph in redeeming love."

In Hymn 404, verse 4, as though the earnest wish there expressed to go up *at once, now, this moment*, and enter into that blessed state of Christian experience were improper and extravagant, it is exchanged for the enquiry—"O when shall it be?" and thus our hopes are deferred to some future and indefinite period. The verse appears in the following form—

"O when shall we at once go up,
No longer this side Jordan stop;
But the good land possess?
When shall we end our lingering years,
Our sorrows, sins, and doubts, and fears,
A howling wilderness?"

And in verse 5, as though it were too much to pray with our poet—

“Now, O my Joshua, bring me in!
Cast out thy foes ; the inbred sin,
The carnal mind remove ”—

as though, to have the *inbred sin* and the *carnal mind removed*, would be a calamity rather than a blessing, something to be deprecated rather than sought after, it is thus altered—

“Saviour divine! O bring us in,
Display thy grace, forgive our sin,
Our unbelief remove.”

In Hymn 343, verse 1, as though it were an unwarrantable thing to pray for

“A heart that always feels thy blood,
So freely spilt for me ”—

the expression is thus softened and lowered—

“A heart that’s sprinkled with the blood,
So freely shed for me.”

Hymn 189, verse 3, is thus altered, and assuredly not for the better—

“O Saviour! Refuge! Hiding-place;
My sins are cancell’d all by thee;
Cover’d is my unrighteousness;
No spot of guilt remains on me;
Thy blood divine, through earth and skies,
Mercy, free, boundless mercy cries.”

In Hymn 59, verse 3, some persons disliking the expression *the brink of fate*, as though it

necessarily implied something unscriptural and heathenish, have altered the last 3 lines, and have thus deprived them of a striking and impressive thought.

Some have altered them thus,—

“Give me to feel their solemn weight,
And save me, ere it be too late;
Wake me to righteousness.”

And others, thus—

“Give us to feel their solemn weight,
To tremble at our guilty state,
And wake to righteousness.”

By the *brink of fate* our poet evidently means the brink of death, the brink of eternity, the brink of ruin; and the idea of a person trembling under the full conviction that he is in that awful position, is terribly grand, and well accords with the character of the whole hymn.

The above may serve as specimens of the alterations to which many of the Wesleyan hymns have been subjected; and as proofs that few or none of those alterations have been real improvements.

Every competent judge will, it is believed, concur in the opinion, that we have in Wesley's hymns many passages that are not only beautiful and elegant, but grand and sublime—passages that unquestionably indicate the hand of a master, and exhibit the true spirit of poetry.

Who can deny that this is the case in Hymn 21, where we have set before us in striking contrast, first the estimate formed by the ungodly of the circumstances and prospects of true Christians; then, their real character and condition? According to the views of the ungodly, their life is madness and misery—their death inglorious and unlamented—they are wretched, obscure, foolish, feeble, poor, contemptible. Now what is the true state of the case? These very persons are in reality priests and kings—they have unsearchable riches and overflowing pleasures—they rejoice evermore—Angels are their servants and their guardians—Jesus is their Friend—Jehovah is their Father—they are already invested with robes of dignity, and they anticipate a crown that shall never fade away. Here we have true grandeur, real nobility, durable riches, endless blessedness; and all this is the portion of the saints of God.

How unspeakably solemn and sublime are the ideas presented to us in Hymns 60, 61, 62, 63, 64! Hymn 60 has been justly characterized as in “a strain more than human.” It is like the language of one, who was himself realizing the infinitely solemn and momentous scenes therein referred to; the conflagration of the present mundane system, the appearance of new heavens and a new earth, and the everlasting exaltation and glory of the righteous. Hymn 61 is, both in

sentiment and in expression, a striking specimen of the true sublime. "It begins (says Mr. Montgomery) with a note abrupt and awakening, like the sound of the last trumpet. This is altogether one of the most daring and victorious flights of our author." Several of the sentiments and of the expressions in this admirable hymn are taken from a passage in Young's Night Thoughts, Night vi., Line 744, &c.—

"If so decreed, the Almighty will be done,
 Let earth dissolve, yon ponderous orbs descend,
 And grind us into dust. The soul is safe,
 The man emerges; mounts above the wreck,
 As towering flame from Nature's funeral pyre;
 O'er devastation, as a gainer, smiles;
 His charter, his inviolable rights,
 Well pleas'd to learn from thunder's impotence,
 Death's pointless darts, and Hell's defeated storms."

With this compare the language of our poet—

"Stand the omnipotent decree!
 Jehovah's will be done!" &c.—

and we shall find Young greatly improved by Wesley. What the former applies indefinitely or generally to *man*, the latter applies exclusively to the *righteous man*, whose flesh rests in hope, waiting for the summons of his *Redeemer*; and thus all these inimitably noble and sublime conceptions are thrown into an evangelical mould. Hymns 63, 64 are very similar in sentiment,

and exquisite in diction; and with their three predecessors, they undoubtedly belong to the highest order of sacred poetry.

Hymn 74 is noble, spirited and impassioned. Were ever longings for immortality more justly or more strikingly expressed than in this hymn? Were ever the thoughts and feelings of an inspired apostle—his confidence, his groans, his earnest desires—more faithfully transfused into an uninspired composition?

“O were we entered there,
To perfect heaven restored!
O were we all caught up to share
The triumph of our Lord!”

“For this in faith we call,
For this we weep and pray
O might the tabernacle fall!
O might we scape away!”

Here we have the very soul and spirit of St. Paul, as it were, embodied and presented to our view. Read that fine passage, 2 Corinthians, v., 1 to 9—and then turn to this unrivalled hymn, as an appropriate illustration of the apostle’s language.

Hymns 140, 141 exhibit a high degree of poetical talent, consecrated to the noblest purpose. The merit of these two hymns is universally acknowledged. Mr. John Wesley, in his brief notice of his brother’s death, observed—“His least praise was, his talent for poetry; although Dr. Watts did not scruple to say, that that single

poem, *Wrestling Jacob*, was worth all the verses he himself had written." "Among Charles Wesley's highest achievements (says Mr. Montgomery) may be recorded this hymn, in which, with consummate art, he has carried on the action of a lyrical drama; every turn in the conflict with the mysterious being, against whom he wrestles all night, being marked with precision by the varying language of the speaker, accompanied by intense, increasing interest, till the rapturous moment of discovery, when he prevails, and exclaims—*I know thee, Saviour, who thou art &c.*" The history of Jacob wrestling with the Angel is here most beautifully illustrated; every minute circumstance of the narrative is seized on by the poet, and applied to the best advantage; the whole is thrown into a dramatic form, and painted in the most vivid colours: and to penitent sinners, who are earnestly seeking the salvation of God, it conveys the strongest encouragement. It shews them that if they persevere in wrestling, striving, praying, they will infallibly succeed. He whose nature and whose name is Love, will come to their relief, and manifest his mercy to their souls.

The following hymns, among others, may be specially referred to, as possessing very superior poetical merit, and as exhibiting, more or less, all that is noble and excellent, dignified and sublime, both in thought and in diction :—

Hymns 73, 168, 203, 204, 220, 228, 235, 240, 241, 262, 272, 277, 287, 307, 314, 315, 325, 328, 333, 348, 349, 368, 385, 386, 407, 430, 431, 488, 491, 494, 499, 513, 525, 535, 536, 537, 538, 552, 554, 556, 607, 613, 625, 629, 630, 633, 669, 670, 671, 689, 690, 703, 724, 725, 733, 734, 735, 761, 762.

Remarks on some of these hymns will be found in the subsequent part of this volume.

CHAPTER V.

REMARKS, CRITICAL, EXPLANATORY, AND CAUTIONARY,
ON SEVERAL OF THE HYMNS.

It is not the writer's design to offer any thing like a regular and complete comment on *all* the hymns in the Wesleyan collection. To do this, would swell the present volume to an inconvenient size, and would probably divert the reader's attention too much from the book itself. But in passing through this entire mass of sacred poetry, we shall find that there are some hymns that deserve special notice, on account of particular circumstances connected with their original composition; some, on the ground of peculiar excellence either of sentiment or of language; some, as containing very strong or singular expressions, which require to be explained and qualified; and some, as containing passages, which if used at all, must be used with very great caution, and which ought never to be employed for general purposes or in promiscuous assemblies.

The hymns of the first three sections, exhorting sinners, or describing the pleasantness of religion and the goodness of God, abound in earnest

persuasives and affectionate invitations. Here the poet is careful to give due prominence to that article of the Wesleyan creed, that Jesus Christ died for all, and that all may be saved through him. On this topic he evidently delights to dwell; and nothing will satisfy him short of communicating to the whole human race the joyful tidings, that through Christ salvation is provided for all, and offered to all. The poet's mind was expanded and ennobled by his creed: and to this circumstance we owe some of the sweetest and most heavenly strains that he ever poured forth.

Hymn 1—"O for a thousand tongues to sing."
This is part of a hymn, written originally *for the anniversary day of one's conversion*. It was probably composed about May, 1739, just a year after the period, when the two brothers were first brought into the enjoyment of Christian liberty, and appeared in the volume entitled "Hymns and Sacred Poems"—the first edition of which was published in 1739. The hymn began thus—

1. "Glory to God, and praise, and love
Be ever, ever given,
By saints below, and saints above,
The church in earth and heaven.
2. "On this glad day the glorious sun
Of righteousness arose;
On my benighted soul he shone,
And fill'd it with repose.

3. "Sudden expired the legal strife ;
 'Twas then I ceas'd to grieve ;
 My second, real, living life
 I then began to live.
- 4 "Then with my heart I first believ'd,
 Believ'd with faith divine ;
 Power with the Holy Ghost receiv'd
 To call the Saviour mine."

The original hymn extended to eighteen verses ; the first verse in our present hymn book being the seventh. The ten verses which we now have are decidedly the choicest portion of the whole, and the best adapted for general purposes ; and they form an admirable introductory hymn.

Hymns 2 and 9 are beautiful illustrations and applications of that language in one of our Saviour's parables—*Come ; for all things are now ready*. The invitation is not only given in general terms, but is urged on the attention of every individual sinner—

"Come, all the world ; come, sinner, thou !"

and every one is intreated to accept of the benefits of the gospel at once, without any delay—

"This is the time ; no more delay"—

"Come in, this moment, at his call."

In Hymn 9, the statement—*all things are now ready*—is expanded in a most interesting and delightful way. We are taught that the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, all are ready to wel-

come the returning sinner—the holy angels are ready to rejoice over him—all the blessings of salvation are ready prepared for his acceptance. Then in verses 6 to 10 these blessings are particularly specified, in strains of exquisite beauty and pathos. What a depth of meaning, what propriety, what truth is there in such lines as these—

“The tears, that tell your sins forgiven;
The sighs, that waft your souls to heaven.”

And then the poet most appropriately closes the whole, with—

“The speechless awe that dares not move,
And all the silent heaven of love.”

Thus he leaves the pardoned sinner, happy in God his Saviour, and so overwhelmed with gratitude, astonishment and love, that he remains silent and motionless.

Hymn 4—“Ho! every one that thirsts, draw nigh!”

This is a fine and dignified paraphrase of that beautiful passage, Isaiah lv., 1, 2, 3.

Hymns 6—“Sinners, turn, why will ye die?”

7—“Let the beasts their breath resign;”—

8—“What could your Redeemer do.”—

These three hymns are a noble expansion of that affecting enquiry, addressed of old to God's chosen, but rebellious people—*Why will ye die, O house of Israel?* This enquiry is amplified in Hymn 6, as proceeding from God our Maker,

from God our Saviour, and from God the Spirit; and the last verse illustrates the spiritual death in which sinners are already involved, and the eternal death to which they are exposed. Hymn 7 turns the emphasis of the solemn expostulation on the pronoun *ye*—*Why will YE die?* and then refers to the peculiar blessings bestowed on the persons here addressed—as being exalted above the brutes—endowed with reason, will, memory, and a capacity of knowing God—as being the subjects of preserving and redeeming mercy—favoured with gospel light and Christian privileges—all these considerations forming so many powerful reasons why they should *not* die. In Hymn 8 the poet still urges the enquiry and with a vehemence that seems almost irresistible; dwelling on the work of the Redeemer, his compassionate invitations, and the shedding of his blood. He appeals to sinners on the ground of God's word, and of his oath; and then closes in a most solemn and pathetic strain, by introducing God himself to confirm and enforce all that had been stated; but then, it is not the *glorious* God, or the *blessed* God, or God surrounded by all the splendours and enjoyments of the heavenly world; but the *suffering* God! What a combination of ideas! Yes, it is God indeed, in the person of the adorable Redeemer; it is Jesus weeping, bleeding, dying, who here reiterates the question—*Why will ye die?* What

can be more deeply affecting, more sublimely poetical, or more scripturally correct, than the concluding lines?

“See! the suffering God appears!
 Jesus weeps; believe his tears!
 Mingled with his blood, they cry,
 Why will you resolve to die?”

Hymns 16, 17 are beautifully descriptive of primitive Christianity, which is here exhibited in a most engaging form. With the exception of one line, the poetry also is smooth and harmonious. That exception occurs in the fifth verse, the second line of which is perhaps the most harsh and disagreeable in the whole Hymn Book.

“Where shall I wander now to find
 The successors they left behind?”

If in the word *successors* the accent be laid as usual on the second syllable, the metre of the line is ruined; and to place the accent on the first syllable, is violent and unnatural.

In verses 8, 9 the poet takes up the scriptural view of the church, as a building composed of a number of living stones. Sinners, converted to God through the instrumentality of the preached gospel, and the operations of the Holy Spirit, form these living stones. At present they lie scattered about in various parts of the earth; they are to be collected by the attractive influ-

ences of the Saviour's eye, drawn together by the music of his name, and so charmed and wrought upon, that by degrees they shall rise into a beauteous frame, and become a holy temple in the Lord, a habitation of God through the Spirit.

“ Ah! gather all thy living stones!
Scatter'd o'er all the earth they lie,
Till thou collect them with thine eye;
Draw by the music of thy name,
And charm into a beauteous frame.”

Probably our poet had his eye on the ancient fable of Orpheus, who is reported to have produced by the charms of his lyre the most astonishing results; so that the savage beasts forgot their wildness, the rivers ceased to flow, the mountains appeared to listen, and the stones and the trees were attracted by his song. This fable is evidently referred to in another very fine hymn of Charles Wesley, written originally “for a musician,” and in all probability for the special use of John Frederick Lampe, an eminent musical performer and composer, who was a personal friend of the two Wesleys.* The following verses of that hymn carry out these truly poetical ideas still more strikingly; and in a way in which they may be adopted not only

* See Jackson's Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley;
Vol. i., page 433.

by the pious musician, who employs his pleasing art to the glory of God, but in a still higher and more important sense, by the faithful minister of the gospel.

“Thine own musician, Lord, inspire,
And let my consecrated lyre
Repeat the Psalmist’s part;
His Son and thine, reveal in me,
And fill with sacred melody
The fibres of my heart.

“So shall I charm the listening throng,
And draw the living stones along,
By Jesu’s tuneful name:
The living stones shall dance, shall rise,
And form a city in the skies,
The new Jerusalem.”

Hymn 18—“Maker, Saviour of mankind.”—

20—“Weary souls, that wander wide.”—

These two hymns are compositions of great beauty and excellence. The latter is a powerful and affectionate exhortation to sinners, in which they are urged to accept at once the salvation so freely offered in the gospel. The antitheses in verse 2 are striking: through the *pain* endured by Christ, we obtain *ease*; through his *expiring groans*, we have *life*; by his *fall*, we have *exaltation*; in him we have all that we need. In verses 3 and 4, the Wesleyan creed is admirably exhibited and applied.

Hymn 21—“Ye simple souls that stray.”—

This noble hymn is partly founded on the sentiments of an apocryphal writer, (Wisdom of Solomon v., 3, 4, 5,) and was composed after some of the riots that were excited at Cork, by the infamous Butler and his mob, in 1749. (See Page 88.)

Hymn 22—"Behold the Saviour of mankind."—

This and several of the following hymns, which refer to the sufferings and death of Christ, are fine specimens of composition in the tender and pathetic style. The writer enters fully into the infinitely-important scenes that are presented to our view, and appears to be lost in grateful amazement, while contemplating the Redeemer's bleeding and dying love. Some of the expressions in Hymn 25 have been strongly objected to, even by some who are in general admirers of Wesley's poetry.

"Give me to feel thy agonies ;
One drop of thy sad cup afford ;
I fain with thee would sympathize,
And share the sufferings of my Lord."

Such words unquestionably need some qualification. In the great work of atoning for sin, Jesus Christ stood quite alone. He had none to help him, none to bear any part of his burden; none, in this sense, to drink even one drop of his cup. The work of atonement was performed, solely and exclusively by the Lord Jesus. In a qualified

sense however, the expression may be allowed: and there is some scriptural ground of vindication. Christians are said to *suffer with Christ*; the apostle Paul declared that he was *filling up*, in his *flesh, that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ*; and our Lord himself said to Zebedee's sons, *Ye shall drink indeed of my cup*. There is therefore a sense in which believers may drink of the Redeemer's cup, and sympathize in his sufferings; though not in the way of atoning for sin. Without such a restriction, the language of this verse would be improper and indefensible.

Hymn 26—"I thirst, thou wounded Lamb of God!"

This is an admirable hymn, combining scriptural truth, poetical fervour, and deep religious experience. Its verses have often been employed to express the grateful and enraptured feelings of those, who are beginning to know something of that love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.

Hymn 30—"Where shall my wondering soul begin?"

This beautiful and noble hymn, originally entitled, *Christ, the Friend of Sinners*—was written by Mr. Charles Wesley, together with another of a kindred stamp (Hymn 201), in May 1738, and one of the two was sung on the very evening when Mr. John Wesley first entered into christian liberty. John having left the meeting in Aldersgate Street, happy in the pardoning love of God, was accompanied by a number of his friends to

the house in which Charles was then residing. The two brothers and the rest of the happy party sang the Hymn with great joy, and parted with prayer.* Nothing could be more appropriate for men whose hearts were overflowing with gratitude to God, and who were desirous that all around them should participate in those blessings, which they had now begun to realize, and which they fully believed to be free for all mankind.

Hymns 33, 34, 35, 37, 39, 40 are, all, compositions of very superior value, excellent both in sentiment and in language, and well adapted for public worship. The appeals to the omnipresent Redeemer in Hymn 33—

“Thou loving, all-atoning Lamb”—

and in Hymn 35—

“Lover of souls! thou know’st to prize
What thou hast bought so dear”—

are very affecting, and when made in sincerity and truth, cannot be disregarded. In verses 6, 7 of Hymn 34—

“O unexampled love,” &c.

we have a noble burst of Christian feeling, such as may well proceed from those who are deeply impressed with the love of God, as manifested in

* See Jackson’s Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley;
Vol. i., page 137.

the gift of his only begotten Son, on behalf of a guilty and perishing world. In verses 6, 7, 8 of Hymn 35, the poet makes a beautiful and ingenious use of the feet, the hands and the side of the Redeemer; and concludes with a bold and striking prosopopœia, in which his wounds are represented as conscious and intelligent beings, and being invested with the power of speech, they cry—"I suffered this for you!" Shakespeare has a fine passage, in which, referring to the wounds and death of Julius Cæsar, he puts these words into the mouth of Antony—

"I tell you that, which you yourselves do know;
 Shew you sweet Cæsar's wounds; poor, poor, dumb
 mouths,
 And bid them speak for me: but were I Brutus,
 And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony,
 Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue
 In every wound of Cæsar, that should move
 The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny."

This is striking and grand, solemn and truly poetical. But the prototype of this figure, in which wounds and blood are personified, is in Holy Scripture. It is found in God's address to the murderer Cain—*the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground*; and in the glowing language of the great apostle, who, referring to *the blood of sprinkling*, tells us that it *speaketh better things than that of Abel*. The language of our poet is only an expansion of the

apostle's sentiment: the blood and the wounds of Christ are still speaking to sinners: through them the Saviour himself is still speaking, and saying—"I suffered this for you."

Hymn 37, is a spirited and delightful composition, in praise of the Redeemer. The last two verses may with propriety and advantage be adopted by every minister of Jesus Christ.

Hymn 38, entitled originally *God's love to mankind*—is a sublime and edifying meditation on the glory, majesty and goodness of Jehovah, and refers especially to the incarnation of the Redeemer, as the most striking display of divine benevolence.

Hymn 39 is taken from the Pamphlet entitled "Hymns on God's everlasting Love," published in 1741. It exhibits that *everlasting love*, in all the fulness and universality of its provisions; and shews that, in Christ, not only is a measure of grace prepared for every man, but such grace, as, if duly improved, will actually lead to salvation. In opposition to the unscriptural limitations, imposed by some on the grace, which is imparted to those who finally perish, as though that grace were capable merely of enlightening and convincing, but not of saving them, our poet asserts most truly, that the grace prepared for all in Christ is *sufficient, sovereign, and saving*; that he has made atonement for all, even for *those who will not come to him*. And in

the last two verses, he shews the influence which the doctrine of general redemption ought to have on our efforts and our prayers: it should lead us to labour and to pray for the salvation of all mankind.

Hymn 40—"Ye neighbours and friends, To Jesus draw near."

This beautiful and spirited hymn was written by Mr. Charles Wesley, after preaching to the colliers at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in December, 1746.

Hymns 43, 44, 45, are deeply solemn and affecting, as well as instructive, and admirably adapted to the momentous subjects on which they treat. Mr. John Wesley, during his latter years, in the society-meetings which he generally held after the evening preaching, usually concluded his exhortation by giving out that fine verse, the last of Hymn 45—

"O that without a lingering groan," &c.

Hymn 46—"The morning flowers display their sweets."

An exquisitely beautiful piece of poetry, composed by the Rev. Samuel Wesley, jun., on the death of a young lady. It is founded on scriptural views of the frailty and uncertainty of human life, here compared to the morning flowers—fragrant and beautiful, but fading and short-lived. And it shews how the Christian triumphs over sickness and death, in anticipating

the resurrection of the body and the enjoyment of heavenly bliss.

Hymn 46—"Come let us anew Our journey pursue." This fine and lively hymn is constantly sung at the watch-night services, usually held by the Wesleyan Methodists, when they close the old year and commence the new one, in the house of God, and in a solemn act of worship. For these occasions it is admirably adapted not only by its appropriate and weighty sentiments, but by its peculiar metre. In this measure each full verse, like verses 2, 5, 6—contains ten anapœsts, or ten regular successions of two short syllables, followed by a long syllable—thus—

Hīs ādō | răblē wīll | Lēt ūs glād | lŷ fŷlfīl
 And oŷr tāl | ěnts ĭmprōve

Bŷ thē pā | tiēnce ōf hōpe | ānd thē lā | boŷr ōf lōve.

Here the short syllables being double the number of the long ones, a character of rapidity and animation is stamped on the metre. And the singing of this hymn, particularly when connected with the stillness and solemnity of the midnight hour, is usually accompanied by powerful and salutary impressions. We feel ourselves roused and excited, and are stirred up to diligence and zeal in preparing for that eternal world, to which we are continually hastening, and of the nearness of which we are at these times especially reminded.

Hymn 48—"Ah! lovely appearance of death!"

This is a very fine and deeply-affecting hymn. To the death of a Christian believer it is very appropriate; though it is only under peculiar circumstances, and for a very short time, that we can ever pronounce the appearance of death *lovely*. It is only when we lose sight of the degradation of the body, and are powerfully impressed with an assurance of the safety and felicity of the soul, that we can enter into the poet's views and feelings. And allowing that the poetry is beautiful and excellent in a high degree, there are, notwithstanding, expressions which cannot be justified: such as—

“In love with the beautiful clay,
And longing to lie in its stead.”

“Whose relics with envy I see.”

The wish expressed in the last verse, is quite in unison with the feelings of one, who is wrought up into a sort of poetical phrensy—

“What now with my tears I bedew,
O might I this moment become!”

Such words, if uttered by any but a true believer, would evince presumption and madness, and would be equivalent to a prayer for instant damnation: and it may be justly doubted whether they could ever, under any circumstances, be used with propriety, even by a child of God. He who adopts this language as his own, ought not only to be fully assured, that he is pardoned

and regenerated, wholly sanctified and thus made meet for the heavenly inheritance; but he ought also to know with certainty that his work on earth is ended, that his race of duty and suffering is run, that no additional service yet remains to be performed by him, no affliction to be endured, no deeper lesson in the divine life to be learned, no further experience of the power of the grace of God to be realized. Otherwise it is premature and presumptuous for him to express such wishes. The first and the last verses of this hymn ought never, on any occasion, to be given out for singing.

“The funeral hymns (says Mr. Watson) have but little of the softness of sorrow, perhaps too little; but they are written in that fulness of faith, which exclaims over the open tomb—*Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* The hymns on the last day are characterized also by the same unflinching faith, which, rejoicing in the smile of the Judge, defies the wild uproar of the elements and the general conflagration itself. In several of these, Mr. Charles Wesley has admirably christianized the *just man* of Horace, dreadless, amidst the ruins of a world—

“Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinæ.”

placing the same fine thought in various aspects, and illustrating it by different circumstances.”*

Hymns 49 to 53 are beautiful and excellent, both in sentiment and in language; and they embody almost everything that can be said as to the safety and happiness of those who die in the Lord. Hymn 52 is specially adapted to the case of a pious youth, called suddenly into eternity; and Hymn 53 to that of an aged and holy widow, whose husband also died in the faith. In verse 2 of the latter hymn the poet throws out an idea which is rather novel, but perhaps not extravagant—

“Where glorified spirits, by sight,
Converse in their holy abode.”

That there is blessed and delightful intercourse among the inhabitants of that heavenly world, there can be no reasonable doubt. In what way that intercourse is carried on, we cannot precisely say; but that holy spirits can converse by sight, without the aid of language, is at least an innocent conjecture.

Hymns 54 to 66 are remarkable no less for solemn, impressive and dignified language, than for the grandeur and importance of the scenes, to which they refer. Hymns 62, 63, 64 were written in December, 1755, soon after the news arrived of the destruction of a considerable part

* Watson's Life of the Rev. John Wesley; page 327.

of Lisbon by a tremendous earthquake, and while the British nation was agitated with apprehensions of a French invasion. Hymns 60, 61, 62 first appeared in a small collection, published by Mr. Charles Wesley for special use on the Fast-Day, appointed by the Government in February, 1756. Hymns 67 and 555 were written on occasion of the earthquake in London, in March, 1750. These considerations shew the meaning and the propriety of several of the expressions used in these hymns. We thus find what our poet specially refers to, when he speaks, in Hymn 60, of God's *vengeful phials*, of *woes and fiery trials*, of *alarming tokens* and *national confusion*—in Hymn 62, of the *bursting cloud* and the *vengeful day*, the *shaking of earth's basis* and the *fall of its cities*—in Hymn 63, of the *Almighty's wrath*, his *judgments*, his *heaviest showers*, and the *pouring out of the seventh angel's phial*—and in Hymn 67, of *the shattered earth* and *a tottering world*. The strongest and boldest of these expressions are not to be regarded as the mere flights of a poetical fancy, or the fictions of an inventive genius; they are based on sober truth, and do not imply more than what really occurred, during that eventful era. When one of the principal cities of Europe became the scene of a catastrophe, which overthrew thousands of houses and hurried many thousands of souls into eternity; it appeared as

though earth's basis were shaken: and when the British metropolis was filled with consternation and terror by the earthquakes of February and March, 1750, it appeared as though the world were tottering to its fall, and the earth were in danger of being shattered and removed. The circumstances of the times should always be kept in mind, in connection with these admirable specimens of sacred poetry.

Hymn 57 is one of great poetical beauty and merit. Instead of the usual alternation of short and long syllables required by the metre, according to which each line should contain four iambuses in regular succession, we have several lines in which a long syllable is used instead of a short one, and a spondee substituted for an iambus. This throws a greater number of long syllables into the line, and thus gives it a slowness, dignity, and solemnity, of which it would otherwise be destitute. Thus in the line—

Whīle twīce | tēn thoū | sānd thūn | dērs rōar—

we have two spondees and two iambuses, or six long syllables and only two short ones. In the line—

Teār ūp | thē grāves | ānd clēave | thē grōund—

the first foot is a trochee instead of an iambus; and the first syllable being a long one, strongly accented, and being followed by two short ones, conveys some idea of the violence, suddenness

and terror of the scene described. In the line

Thē ēarth | nō mōre | hēr slāin | cōncēal—

the second foot is a spondee instead of an iambus. Nearly the same remarks are applicable to the last line of verse 3, as to the third of verse 1—

Stānd ās | thē rōck | ōf ā | gēs sūre—

Here also we have a trochee for the first foot, and a long syllable, followed by two short ones. The long and important syllable *stand* being placed in front of this line, and the long syllable *sure* at the close, cut off by the cœsura, and insulated, as it were, from the rest of the line, are well adapted to convey an impression of the stability, safety and security of those, who can adopt such language as their own. In the line—

Wē, while | thē stārs | frōm hēaven | shāll fāl—

the cœsura, coming in so uncommon a position, after the first syllable *we*, makes that word peculiarly emphatical, and strongly fixes the attention on those to whom such sayings are applicable, as contrasted with persons of an opposite character, whose final doom will be the reverse of all that is stated in the third and following verses. The latter half of verses 4 and 5, and the whole of verse 6, are beautifully expressive of the calmness and composure, with which true Christians will be enabled to contemplate scenes so grand and awful.

Hymn 59—"Thou God of glorious majesty."

15- "This (says Mr. Montgomery) is a sublime contemplation—solemn, collected, unimpassioned thought; but thought occupied with that which is of everlasting import to a dying man, standing on the lapse of a moment between two eternities." It has been supposed that the striking and sublime thought in verse 2—

"Lo! on a narrow neck of land,
'Twixt two unbounded seas, I stand"

was first suggested to Mr. Charles Wesley by the bold scenery in the neighbourhood of the Land's End, during one of his early visits to the West of Cornwall, in 1743 or 1744. There we have literally a narrow neck of land, stretching out between two seas; that is, the Bristol Channel to the North, and the English Channel to the South; and from some of the high parts of the country both seas can be seen. (See Page 15.)

Hymn 62, in a very animated and dignified strain, describes the peace, security and happiness of the people of God, in times of political commotion and national distress.

Hymns 63, 64 are eminently solemn and sublime. The poet brings full to our view the grandeurs and the terrors of the great day of judgment; and to the enquiries which the trembling sinner is constrained to make on the anticipated arrival of that day—What shall I do? Where shall I look for refuge? Where can I find

a place of safety?—he gives a most satisfactory reply by directing him to the Lord Jesus. And the Redeemer is beautifully represented under the scriptural metaphor of a rock—a rock cleft asunder—a rock beneath whose shade and within whose cleft, there is perfect security.

Hymn 65—"Ye virgin souls, arise."—

This is a fine poetical paraphrase and application of the parable of the ten virgins, going out to meet the bridegroom. The concluding lines of the last verse—

"When Jesus doth the heavens bow,
(let us) Be found, as Lord, thou find'st us now"

express a petition, which it would be highly improper to put into the mouths of a large and promiscuous assembly. Such language is fit for none but those who are pardoned and renewed, emptied of sin and filled with love; and who are habitually living in the spirit of watchfulness and prayer.

Hymn 66—"Lo! he comes with clouds descending."

This is a spirited and noble hymn, in a metre well adapted either for cheerful or for solemn subjects. There is something very striking and eminently poetical in the third verse, which represents the Redeemer's glorified body as still bearing *the tokens of his passion*, and the saints as gazing *with rapture* on the *glorious scars*. The

scriptural authority for this is found in our Lord's address, after his resurrection, to Thomas—*Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side:* and in the exhibition of the heavenly world presented to St. John, in which stood *a Lamb, as it had been slain*. Hence there is reason to believe, that the marks and evidences of our Saviour's sufferings and death still remain on his person, and will so remain for ever.

In Hymn 67 the poet starts with the ideas suggested by an inspired writer (Psalm xlix. 11) and finely contrasts the prospects of the mere worldling with those of the child of God. In the last two verses he gives utterance to one of his favourite sentiments, and offers an earnest prayer for the immediate arrival of the day of judgment. Such language may in some degree be vindicated by the words of St. Peter, who represents believers as *looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God*; and by those of St. John, who having recorded the last communication which he had received from his divine Master, in those solemn terms—*Surely I come quickly; Amen*—immediately subjoins—*Even so, come, Lord Jesus*. But it should be used very cautiously. It should be adopted by none, but those who have a scriptural and well-grounded hope of eternal felicity; and by them, only in the exercise of perfect resignation to the divine

will, and with entire willingness to wait all the days of their appointed time, till their final change shall come. The same remarks are applicable to many other passages in these hymns.

Hymn 68.—“How happy is the pilgrim’s lot!”

This might properly be entitled *The Christian Pilgrim*. It is one of the few hymns in the Collection that were composed by the Rev. John Wesley, and is unquestionably a beautiful piece of poetry. Very few persons, however, can adopt all the verses as applicable to their own state. Some of the language is so strong, that even Mr. John Wesley—pilgrim as he was in a very eminent degree—as dead perhaps, as any real Christian could be, to the honors, riches, and enjoyments of this world—could not adopt it absolutely, and without qualification. It was only in a comparative and restricted sense that even *he* could say—

“No foot of land do I possess,
No cottage in this wilderness”—

“Nothing on earth I call my own.”—

In the last two verses, we find the writer, notwithstanding his characteristic sobriety and self-possession, so borne away by the train of thought that he was pursuing, and by the poetical inspiration which he felt, that he slides, almost imperceptibly, into the sentiment so often ex-

pressed in his brother's poetry, and prays for an immediate admission into Paradise—

“Now let the pilgrim's journey end :
Now, O my Saviour, Brother, Friend,
Receive me to thy breast.”

Among the hymns describing Heaven, are some of peculiar excellence; in which the poet has very happily availed himself of the beautiful and impressive images, furnished by Holy Scripture. Five of these hymns (70, 73, 77, 78, 79) are in the anapæstic measure; in which the first foot is usually an iambus; the second and third feet, anapæsts.

Ǽ lōng | tō bēhōld | hīm ārrāyed—
Ǽ wāy | wīth oŭr sōr | rōw ānd fēar—

Here each line contains five short, and three long syllables; and the metre has in it something peculiarly pleasing. It is capable of all the softness and delicacy, which are proper for the most solemn and pathetic subjects; and at the same time of all the animation and fire, which correspond with a joyful and triumphant strain: as examples of the former may be mentioned Hymns 48, 49, 53; of the latter, Hymns 73, 220, 228. But its predominating characteristic is animation and cheerfulness.

Hymns 69, 71, 72, are all excellent. There is something very striking in the calm and dignified way, in which, in verses 1 and 2 of Hymn 69,

the Christian is represented as going to meet his last enemy, death: not dismayed at the prospect, not alarmed by any apprehensions as to the result of death; but confidently anticipating a complete victory, and an immediate admittance into glory. Verse 4 is calculated to check any vain curiosity that we may be disposed to indulge, as to the nature of the enjoyments, reserved in the heavenly world for the saints of God.

Hymn 71 is a beautiful illustration of the pilgrimage of true Christians, who are journeying through this world towards the new Jerusalem, the city of the living God. That is a fine idea, and equally correct, at the close of verse 5—

“That palace of our glorious King,
We find it nearer while we sing.”

If love be the very element of heaven—inasmuch as *God is love*—the more of that love we obtain, while on earth, the more do we approximate to the state of the blessed spirits around the throne. If we are getting an increase of divine love, we are verily rising nearer and nearer to heaven itself; and the above-quoted line is no longer hyperbole.

Hymn 73—“Away with our sorrow and fear.”—

This is an admirable hymn, in which the beauty of the language and the grandeur of the imagery are set off to the best advantage by the liveliness of the metre: all according exceedingly well

with the feelings produced by the contemplation of such objects. Perhaps the closing lines of the last verse need some qualification—

“And all the enjoyment above
Consists in the rapturous gaze.”

The beatific sight of God in Christ will undoubtedly be the *summum bonum*—the chief felicity of glorified saints—the all in all of heaven itself. Yet we should not imagine that there will be any thing like a monotony—a perpetual sameness of enjoyments. On the contrary, there is good reason to believe that there will be novelty and variety in that world of purity and bliss; an eternal succession of pleasures, springing ever fresh and new, from the inexhaustible fountains of divine love.

Hymns 75, 76 are two fine and excellent compositions, founded on that delightful portion of Holy Writ, Revelation vii. 9 to 17. The metre also is solemn, dignified, and well adapted to the subject.

CHAPTER VI.

REMARKS ON VARIOUS HYMNS, CONTINUED.

THE hymns, praying for a blessing, 81 to 90, are all excellent in their kind, and better adapted than many of the others to general use, in a large and promiscuous assembly.

There is something very affecting in the appeals to the compassionate Redeemer, in verses 5, 6 of Hymn 82, on behalf of careless and perishing sinners—

“Why should they die, when thou hast died;
Hast died to bear their sins away?”

“Why should the foe thy purchase seize?”

These are sentiments into which all ministers of Christ should especially enter; and by such considerations their zeal in the service of their blessed Master ought to be inflamed more and more.

Hymn 84 was composed by Mr. Charles Wesley in June 1746, before preaching at Portland in Dorsetshire, where the people were mostly employed in the stone quarries. The phraseology of the first verse—

“Strike with the hammer of thy word,
And break these hearts of stone”--

may have been suggested by the scenes, which then attracted the poet's notice: but both the ideas are scriptural. See Jeremiah xxiii., 29.—Ezekiel xxxvi., 26.

Hymns 85, 86 are admirably adapted to public worship, and exhibit in a very impressive way the universal provisions of the gospel, inviting all without exception to participate therein.

Hymns 87, 88, 89 shew the purposes which are to be answered by the Holy Scriptures, and furnish us with a variety of excellent petitions. If used aright, they cannot be used without benefit.

The hymns, descriptive of formal religion, 91 to 94, are very valuable, as pointing out and guarding us against one of those rocks, on which thousands have split; namely the substitution of outward and formal observances for inward and experimental godliness. Hymns 91, 92 were written in 1740, in the midst of those disputes relative to Christian means and ordinances, which had then commenced between the Moravians and the early Methodists; some of the former having unhappily imbibed and having begun to propagate antinomian sentiments. While some unduly exalted the means of grace, as though a regular attendance on them constituted the whole of religion; and others unduly depreciated them, as though to Christian believers they were unnecessary and useless; the two Wesleys held on their steady course, guarding against ex-

tremes, both on the right hand and on the left; and these four hymns embody those just, sound and scriptural views on this important subject, which they ever afterwards maintained, and which are still maintained by all true Methodists.

The hymns describing inward religion, 95 to 98, are particularly excellent, and clearly point out that inward experience, that work of God in the heart, which is the very essence of pure and undefiled religion.

Hymn 95 is a fine specimen of poetical composition. Verse 4 is soft, smooth and beautiful in diction, and at the same time expresses most important theological truth—

“To him that in thy name believes,
Eternal life with thee is given;
Into himself he all receives,
Pardon, and holiness, and heaven.”

Verse 6 strikingly exhibits the effect of true faith, and concludes in that bold and daring style, which delights in strong and paradoxical language—

“The invisible appears in sight,
And God is seen by mortal eye.”

The peace, the joy, the love of the true believer, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the meek and lowly mind of Christ, the cheerful obedience to all his commands, the pursuit of perfect holiness—are all beautifully set before us

in Hymn 96. And in Hymn 97, one who has experienced the drawings of the Father, and the enlightening and convincing operations of the Spirit, is led on in earnest desire after greater blessings—even the sense of sin forgiven; the witness of the Holy Spirit, that he is a child of God; the love of God shed abroad in his heart; and the ability to draw nigh with confidence to God, as his reconciled Father in Christ Jesus.

The hymns praying for repentance, and those for persons convinced of sin or of backsliding, 99 to 181, abound in strong and correct views of the guilt and wretchedness, depravity and helplessness of fallen man. Penitential sorrow and humiliation are strikingly displayed, and earnest petitions for pardon and salvation are interspersed. Many of these petitions are addressed to the divine and compassionate Saviour; and they shew us the ground on which we may plead with him, while seeking deliverance from the guilt and curse of sin. Nothing can be better calculated than this whole class of hymns, to beat down the pride of the unrenewed heart, to lay the sinner low in the dust and ashes before God, to drive him away from every false prop and refuge, and to prepare him for the immediate reception of the blessings of the gospel, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Hymn 106 the poet beautifully applies the affecting incident of Christ's turning and looking

upon Peter, just after the apostle had, for the third time, denied his Lord. The burden of each verse is—

“ Turn, and look upon me, Lord,
And break my heart of stone.”

Verses 5, 6, 7, 8 shew the kind of look, which the poor penitent sinner solicits from his Redeemer: such a look, as he cast on Adam after his fall—on the Israelites, when groaning under Egyptian bondage—on the sinner, who washed his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head—on his murderers, when he prayed, *Father, forgive them*. Then at length his prayer is heard, his request is granted; and instead of uttering the petition once more, he closes by saying—

“ O my bleeding, loving Lord !
Thou break'st my heart of stone.”

Hymn 108 was originally entitled—*Grace before Meat*. In the first four verses the poet, in strong and elegant language, describes the lamentable consequences of the fall, shewing that the creatures are changed from their original purpose and tendency, being cursed on account of man's sin; so that his pleasure becomes his bane, all nature is infected, his very food helps to poison him. Then in verse 5, we are taught to address *our heavenly Adam*, and implore his healing influences, that he may *hallow our*

food, and reverse our doom. The blessed effects of the Redeemer's glorious undertakings, realized by every true Christian, are most beautifully pointed out in the closing verse—

“Earth then a scale to heaven shall be ;
Sense shall point out the road ;
The creatures all shall lead to thee,
And all we taste, be God.”

Then will our food indeed be sanctified, and our ordinary meals will become to us means of grace. And this is nothing more than we shall actually experience, when we have learned, whether we *eat, or drink, or whatsoever we do, to do all to the glory of God.* There is peculiar beauty in the first line of verse 7—

Tŭrn thě | fŭll strēam | ōf nā | tŭre's tīde—

Here instead of the usual succession of four iambuses, the first foot is a trochee, and the second a spondee. The two long syllables of the spondee compel us to dwell longer on those two words, and harmonize well with the idea of amplitude and abundance in the stream—a stream that is both wide and deep: while the rapid transition from the strongly-accented word *Turn* to the spondee in the second foot—so rapid, that the short intervening syllable *the* seems almost forgotten—gives some impression of the power and violence with which this *full stream* is turned into a new channel, so that

henceforward the tide shall flow in an opposite direction.

Hymn 112 is an ingenious and evangelical application of the story of the good Samaritan.

Hymn 114 is part of a hymn written originally by Mr. Charles Wesley, on parting with his friends. We have here only 4 verses out of 29; and these are perhaps all that can be well adapted to general use.

Hymn 115 takes up the idea thrown out by the apostle Paul, who spoke of himself as the *chief of sinners*, and the close of every verse is—

“I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me.”

The same idea we have in verse 4 of Hymn 116—

“Me, the vilest of the race,
Most unholy, most unclean;
Me, the farthest from thy face,
Full of misery and sin;
Me with arms of love receive,
Me, of sinners chief, forgive.”

And no well-instructed disciple of Christ will scruple to apply this language to himself, and to confess that such, originally and by nature, was his state. Every such person will be inclined to view himself—that is, when considered not as a believer, but merely as a sinner, independently of divine grace and of the influences of the Holy Spirit—as the chief of sinners, the vilest

of the race, the most unholy, the farthest from God. This is the language of unfeigned humility, and of profound self-knowledge.

Hymn 122 is, throughout, an affecting appeal to the once-crucified Saviour. While however the poet dwells somewhat in detail on the circumstances of our Lord's passion, his being transfix'd on Calvary, having his eyes quenched and his head bowed in death, we have nothing of that low, colloquial phraseology, which some writers employ: every expression is proper, solemn, dignified. Though he is referred to as "The man, transfix'd on Calvary"—he is also declared to be—"The one eternal God and true."

Hymn 127 is a beautiful exposition of that fine passage, Micah vi., 6, 7, 8. First, the sinner is led to discover his guilt and helplessness; he is shewn that there is no way whatever, either by sacrifices, or by costly offerings, or by present or future obedience, in which he can atone for his past offences. He is consciously guilty, deserving of everlasting punishment, and acknowledges the justice of his condemnation. Then, when no other prop can be found, when no other plea presents itself, he takes up this plea—*Thy Son hath died*. That plea he urges, and urges successfully; for his prayer being accompanied by the Redeemer's intercession, has power with God, and he obtains the salvation which he needs.

Nothing can be more beautifully pathetic

than the appeals made in many of these hymns, to the adorable and omnipresent Redeemer. Thus in Hymn 128 the person speaking, begins to consider and enquire—Will God, a being so great and glorious, known but partially, even to angels, manifest himself to me? Will he leave his heavenly throne, and appear to me, a worm of the earth? Then, when one might begin to fear and despond, he suddenly turns aside, as it were, from the former current of thought, appeals to the Redeemer for an answer, dwells on his sacrificial work, realizes the efficacy of his atonement, and is finally admitted to the beatific vision. There is something inexpressibly affecting in that appeal—

“ Answer, thou man of grief and love,
And speak it to my heart.”

In addition to the remarks already made on those two unrivalled hymns, 140, 141, (Page 90) the following observations may advantageously be introduced. “It applies, with admirable ingenuity and tact, the patriarch’s mysterious conflict and the happy result to which it led, to the process of an awakened sinner’s salvation. The absence of company, the night season, the length of the struggle, the lameness inflicted upon the patriarch, the return of the morning, the communication of the desired blessing; are all brought to bear upon the penitent’s deliverance from sin, obtained by praying, agonizing

faith, and followed by the joy of pardon and holiness, and by the race for eternal life. The sentiments of this hymn are as true to fact, as they are to sound theology. The divine angel with whom Jacob wrestled, was unquestionably the Son of God; and that the patriarch received, in the course of that memorable conflict, not merely the assurance of temporal preservation, but actual salvation from sin, is undeniable. From that time his conduct proves him to have been a new man." *

Hymn 143—"Jesu, lover of my soul."—

This is a composition of great poetical beauty; and it delineates so correctly the views, feelings and desires of a true Christian, that it has become a favourite among the pious of all denominations:

Hymn 147—"O love divine, how sweet thou art!"

This is an excellent hymn, beautifully expressive of gracious feelings and of ardent desires. Some of the language is so strong, that if used at all, it should be used with very great care and caution—

"I thirst, I faint, I die to prove
The greatness of redeeming love,
The love of Christ to me."

"For love I sigh, for love I pine."—

* Jackson's Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley; Vol. i.
Page 306.

To *thirst* implies a high degree of desire, eager, impatient, resolute; to *faint* implies still more; desire becoming so strong and so vehement, that the person under its influence is quite overpowered, and sinks into a state of unconsciousness. But even this does not satisfy the poet; the person not only faints, but *dies*. Here desire is carried to the highest possible pitch, and human nature can sustain it no longer; the exercises of the mind are too powerful for the frail tenement of clay, and life itself becomes extinct. The same figure of speech we have also in that fine hymn, 240 —

“While thee, all-infinite, I set
By faith before my ravish’d eye,
My weakness bends beneath the weight;
O’erpower’d I sink, I faint, I die.”

In this last line the gradation of ideas is regular and beautiful, and the climax is perfect. But this fine and bold poetical language, though it may help in private meditation and in the exercises of the closet, can scarcely be regarded as proper for general use in the sanctuary, or in public worship.

Hymn 151—“Out of the deep I cry.”—

This is a very affecting hymn, abounding in strong and vivid descriptions of the sinner’s guilty, wretched and perishing condition, and in striking appeals to the compassion of the

Saviour. Two lines of verse 3 have been a little misunderstood—

“Canst thou not accept my prayer?

Not bestow the grace I claim?”

It might be supposed that the negative *not* is here intended to qualify the preceding verb *canst* expressed in the first line, and understood in the second; according to which interpretation, the meaning is as though he had said—

Art thou not able to accept my prayer?

Not able to bestow the grace I claim?

But the poet's design was, to connect the negative in each case with the following verb *accept*—*bestow*—and by this prefix to reverse the meaning of the verb. Not to accept is, to reject; not to bestow, is to withhold: and this leads us to the true sense of the two lines; which is—

“Canst thou reject my prayer?

(Canst thou) withhold the grace I claim?”

Hymn 154—“Fain would I leave the world below.”

This fine, but melancholy hymn was written by Mr. Charles Wesley about January 1737, and was originally entitled—*A midnight hymn, for one under the law*. It contained six verses, the first and second of which are now omitted; and it exhibited the defective and unevangelical creed of one, who had never been brought into Christian liberty, and who had no hope of solid and permanent happiness, previous to death. Ac-

cordingly his brother John, when adopting it into his collection, was careful, in the last line of verse 1, to substitute *faith* for *death*. "Thus altered, (says Mr. Jackson) it no longer appears as the desponding language of a real Christian, expecting to be made free from sin and its attendant misery only by the body's dissolution; but as the prayer of a weeping penitent, who is convinced of his guilt and corruption, and is looking for a present deliverance from them, through faith in the blood of atonement." The first two verses, as being worthy of preservation, are subjoined—

"While midnight shades the earth o'erspread,
And veil the bosom of the deep,
Nature reclines her weary head,
And care respires, and sorrows sleep:
My soul still aims at nobler rest,
Aspiring to her Saviour's breast.

"Aid me, ye hovering spirits near,
Angels and ministers of grace;
Who ever, while you guard us here,
Behold your heavenly Father's face:
Gently my raptur'd soul convey
To regions of eternal day."

Hymn 155—"God of my life, what just return."

This is part of a beautiful and affecting hymn, (8 verses out of 17) written by Mr. Charles Wesley at Oxford, about March, 1738, just after his recovery from a dangerous illness.

Hymn 156 is a fine morning hymn.

Hymn 158—"O my God, what must I do?"

Some of the expressions in this hymn are so strong, that it is doubtful whether they can on any ground be justified.

"Force me, Lord, with all to part"—

"Force me to be saved by grace."

The same sentiment we find in other hymns. Thus in Hymn 2, we have "Yield to his love's resistless power"—and in Hymn 102—"Strike with thy love's resistless stroke." We must beware of taking up the idea, that the operations of the Spirit of God on the minds of men are, generally and absolutely, irresistible. This would be in direct opposition to many scriptural declarations; and would make many scriptural precepts and cautions unmeaning and absurd. If those operations are under any circumstances and to any extent irresistible, it is only for a short time, and in reference to some of the earlier movements of that divine agent in the human soul; when he first communicates light and influence and power, discovers to the sinner his guilt and danger, alarms his conscience, and excites apprehensions of the wrath to come. The general rule is, that the grace communicated by God, must be used and improved by man; *for whosoever hath, to him shall be given and he shall have more abundance.* Hence while God is

working in us, to will and to do, of his good pleasure, we are required to *work out our own salvation*, with fear and trembling. In fact, these passages of our poet may be found to furnish an antidote to the error, which at first view they seem to countenance. For if the operations of the Holy Spirit were really carried on independently of man's acquiescence and concurrence, there would be no propriety in praying for such divine visitations. In teaching the sinner to offer that petition—"force me to be saved by grace"—we teach him that, even allowing that God may, and sometimes does operate in that powerful way intimated by the term *force*, still he will not do it, unless we pray for it; unless in effect we submit to such operations. And in exhorting sinners to "yield to his love's resistless power"—we undoubtedly teach them, that this power—resistless as it is said to be—will accomplish nothing in their behalf, unless they yield to it. They may by possibility oppose it; they may set themselves against it; and while they thus act—however mighty the power of God's love—whatever wonders it is capable of effecting—it will avail them nothing at all. They must yield to it, in order that they may profit by it.

Hymn 168—"Depth of mercy! can there be."—

This hymn admirably describes the feelings of a penitent, broken-hearted sinner, deeply

humbled under a consciousness of his aggravated guilt, in having cast away the grace of God and fallen into a state of apostacy. Most beautifully does the poet introduce and apply the doctrine of the atonement and intercession of Christ; exhibiting it as the only available plea in the sinner's favour, the only foundation on which he can build any hopes of salvation. Never was that fine saying of the psalmist—*mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other*—better illustrated, than in verses 3 and 4—

“Lo! I cumber still the ground :
Lo! an advocate is found!” &c.

The last line of this verse is, both in sentiment and in expression, exquisite and inimitable—

“Justice lingers into love.”

Verse 4—“Kindled his relentings are,” &c.

is, throughout, so graphic, so pathetic, and so full of solemn and important truth, that it is scarcely possible to read or hear it without powerful and hallowed emotions.

Hymn 175—“God of my salvation, hear.”—

In verses 3 and 4 of this fine hymn, the poet strongly and strikingly sets forth the sinner's impotence and helplessness, his entire lack of every thing like goodness or strength, excellence or merit, and his abandonment of every plea, except the atonement of Christ.

In verse 5 of Hymn 177, among many suitable confessions and petitions, we are taught to say—

“ Sin only let me not commit ;
Sin never can advance thy praise.”

This is a most important sentiment, and worthy of all attention. Let no one imagine that sin is ever necessary, or that it can, under any circumstances, be advantageous. To suppose that the glory of God may be promoted by our sin, is perfectly absurd: it is an opinion directly opposed to the whole tenor of Scripture precepts, and pregnant with the most dangerous consequences. By the grace of God we may be preserved from committing sin henceforward, and as long as we live; and the more fully we are saved from sin, the more effectually will our own welfare be secured, and the more extensively shall we be enabled to promote the glory and praise of God.

In Hymns 184, 185, we have a beautiful and very instructive exhibition of the repentance of a believer; of one, who is freed from all guilty and painful fear, but is deeply humbled in the presence of his God, and realizes something of what was felt by the patriarch Job, when he exclaimed—*I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.* Such

repentance cannot be better delineated, than in such lines as these—

“ My humbled soul, when thou art near,
In dust and ashes lies ;
How shall a sinful worm appear,
Or meet thy purer eyes ? ”

“ I loathe myself, when God I see,
And into nothing fall ;
Content, if thou exalted be ;
And Christ be all in all . ”

“ After all that I have done,
Saviour, art thou pacified ?
Whither shall my vileness run ?
Hide me, earth, the sinner hide.
Let me sink into the dust ;
Full of holy shame, adore . ”

The hymns for believers rejoicing, 189 to 264, are excellent in a high degree, and leave most compositions of this class far behind. They present the believer to our view in the full and conscious enjoyment of pardon, claiming all the privileges, to which he is graciously entitled as a child of God ; exulting in the triune Deity, as his reconciled Father, his satisfying portion, his covenant God ; anticipating still greater blessings on earth, with eternal glory and happiness in heaven.

Hymn 189—“ Now I have found the ground wherein . ”—

“ A glorious hymn (says Mr. Benjamin Love,)—
it speaks the humble joy of a new-born soul.

With what heart-felt exultation has many a poor mourning penitent, on first feeling the efficacy of the atonement, breathed out the language of this hymn! The first verse expresses his new-found confidence; the second embodies a deep sense of the tender compassion of God the Father; the third seems an enraptured contemplation of the love of Christ. The last two lines of the third stanza—

‘While Jesu’s blood, through earth and skies,
Mercy, free, boundless mercy cries’—

contain a highly-exhilarating statement, and have a striking association. They were almost the last words of Mr. Fletcher of Madeley, whose impression in the hour of death of the truths they contain was so strong, that his feeble voice re-echoed the word *boundless, boundless*, with surprising energy.”

Hymn 190—“Jesus, thy blood and righteousness.”—

“Another version of this hymn (says the same writer) has appeared in a Moravian hymn-book; but so tame, so feeble, abounding in such low language, that the splendid thoughts it contains are rendered almost ridiculous. Mr. Wesley’s translation is worthy of the theme, and constitutes one of the finest hymns in the collection. Observe in the fifth stanza what a distinct allusion is made to his favourite doctrine of universal redemption, and what an outburst it contains of

Christian feeling. How opposed to the contracted doctrine, which consigns myriads of souls to perdition, because for them Christ never died.”*

Hymn 191 is a fine hymn of thanksgiving to the Father, from his newly-adopted child.

Hymn 192 is a beautiful illustration of the righteousness of faith, according to the apostle's statement, Romans x., 6, 7, 8.

Hymns 193, 194, 195 delightfully express the grateful and devout feelings of a believer towards that Divine Saviour, to whom he is indebted for his redemption, and for all the blessings connected therewith. They also point out in a very instructive way the character and the offices of the Redeemer.

Hymn 197 is an excellent paraphrase and application of that fine chapter, Isaiah xii.

Hymns 198, 199. Such is the spirit of gratitude breathing through these hymns, and such the lively and cheerful metre in which they are written, that it is scarcely possible to read or hear them, without having the heart warmed with divine love, or without receiving some consolation and benefit. The metre is one of the most pleasing and lively in the whole collection.

Ō whāt | shall Ī dō | M̄y Sā | vior̄ tō prāise—

Sō fāith | fūl ānd trūe | Sō plēn | teoūs ĩn grāce—

Sō strōng | tō dēlīv | ēr Sō gōod | tō rēdeēm—

Thē wēak | ěst bēlīēv | ēr Thāt hāngs | ūpōn hīm.

* See Love's Records of Wesleyan Life, chapter xxix.

Here each line consists of four feet: in the former couplet, the first and third feet are either spondees or iambuses; the second and fourth are anapæsts, making in all ten syllables. In the latter couplet the first foot is a spondee or iambus, the other three are anapæsts, making eleven syllables. There being therefore in the entire stanza ten anapæsts, in which we have twenty short syllables, set in juxta-position with ten long ones, the movement is somewhat more rapid than usual, and the metre seems to be adapted exclusively to cheerful and joyous subjects.

Hymn 201—"And can it be that I should gain."—
This very beautiful hymn, entitled originally, *Free Grace*, was composed in London by Mr. Charles Wesley, in May, 1738, just after he was first made happy in the pardoning love of God. (See Page 102.) It admirably expresses the views of the Christian believer, who is lost in grateful amazement, while contemplating the love of God manifested towards him: and it exactly harmonizes with the feelings and sentiments, by which we may suppose the inspired apostle to have been impressed, when he exclaimed—*Behold! what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us!* Verse 4 describes, in the most appropriate and most striking language, the change effected in the believer, when he passed from a state of guilt and condemnation into a

state of peace and liberty: and the scene so graphically depicted by the poet, is an exact counterpart of that given by the sacred writer, in recording the deliverance of Peter from prison, through the instrumentality of an angel of the Lord. Acts xii., 7.

Hymn 202—"Arise, my soul, arise."—

The third verse of this fine hymn is highly poetical. By a strong effort of imagination, not unsanctioned by scripture authority, the poet persuades himself that the Saviour's wounds are still fresh, still bleeding: then by a bold *protopœia* he converts them into intelligent beings, and represents them as interceding with God, and interceding effectually on behalf of the penitent sinner. See Page 104.

Hymn 203—"Glory to God, whose sovereign grace."—

This is a calm and dignified hymn of thanksgiving to God, for the success of the gospel, and was intended originally for the Kingswood colliers; numbers of whom could with truth adopt the expressions in verses 7 and 8. It was written by Mr. Charles Wesley in the midst of his labours about Bristol and Kingswood, in 1740. The thought in verse 5,

"For this the hosts above rejoice;
We raise the happiness of heaven"—

is a truly astonishing one, but fully supported by Scripture. Our Lord assures us that *there is*

joy in heaven—joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth. It is therefore just and reasonable to believe, that when many sinners are converted, that joy becomes greater, and that the happiness of heaven is actually increased by means of what takes place on earth.

Hymn 204 might be entitled, *The Christian Musician's Hymn.* It is a fine composition, and pleasingly shews how the powers of the voice and the charms of music may be sanctified, by being consecrated to the Redeemer's glory.

Hymn 205—"My God I am thine, what a comfort divine."—

This is the rapturous and triumphant language of a believer, rejoicing in his God. The liveliness of the metre is admirably adapted to the sentiments expressed. The metre is nearly, though not exactly, like that of Hymns 198, 199. The second and the fourth lines of each stanza consist generally of four anapæsts, containing 8 short and 4 long syllables; and the recurrence of so many short syllables in one line makes it more than usually rapid and animated.

Hymn 206—"What am I, O thou glorious God?"—

Here the poet beautifully expands and illustrates the sentiments expressed by David, 2 Samuel vii., 18: applying them to the case of the Christian believer.

209—"Thou hidden source of calm repose."—

In verses 3 and 4 of this fine hymn, we have a comment on the words—*Christ is all and in all*, illustrating also that other inspired saying—*All things are yours*. The poet selects various circumstances of trial, suffering and distress; and in several striking antitheses, he points out the privilege and the happiness of the true Christian. Christ is his rest in toil—his ease in pain—his peace in war—his gain in loss—his liberty in bondage. Last of all, to complete the climax, he introduces the strongest and most hyperbolical of all the expressions employed, declaring that Jesus is his *heaven in hell*. All the other expressions in these verses may be understood literally, as referring to possible events, and to circumstances, through which many of the disciples of Christ have actually had to pass. But this last expression can be understood only in a figurative way. It cannot be applied to the place or state of eternal torment, which we usually designate by the term *hell*: but must be considered as implying merely a place or a state of the greatest bodily suffering, or the most distressing exercises of mind, not connected with a guilty conscience. Such circumstances might be regarded as constituting a local or temporary hell; and if a Christian believer were so situated, he would still have a heaven of peace and comfort in his soul; and thus he might truly affirm that Christ is his *heaven in hell*.

Hymn 210—"Thee will I love, my strength, my tower."—

Here the poet starts with the royal Psalmist's pious resolution, Psalm xviii., 1 : which resolution is beautifully amplified, extended through the diversified scenes of human life, and connected with grateful acknowledgments of the past favours of his God, as also with fervent prayers for his continued support and blessing.

Hymn 213—"My God, the spring of all my joys."—

This is one of the most delightful hymns ever written by Dr. Watts, and has in it more of sound religious experience, than is found in the majority of his compositions. Among the truly pious it is a universal favourite, and deservedly so.

Hymn 214—"Talk with us, Lord thyself reveal."—

A fine hymn, originally intended for use on a journey. The idea and the expression in verse 2 are borrowed from Milton ; who represents Eve as saying, in one of her addresses to Adam,

"With thee conversing, I forget all time,
All seasons and their change ; all please alike."

But how is the sentiment elevated and dignified, when Christian believers are taught, in approaching their heavenly Father, to say—

"With thee conversing, we forget
All time, and toil, and care ;
Labour is rest, and pain is sweet,
If thou, my God, art here."

Hymn 216—"Infinite, unexhausted love!"—

In the second verse of this excellent hymn, the poet having referred to the length, and breadth, and height, and depth of sovereign grace, agreeably to the apostle's language, Ephesians iii., 18, proceeds to illustrate those ideas. At the same time he takes care to shew that by *sovereign grace*, he does not mean what some do, when they use the expression; he does not mean partial grace, limited grace, grace bestowed in an arbitrary way on a favourite few, but withholden from the great bulk of mankind; but that grace which God exhibits, as a wise just and merciful sovereign, in and through Christ Jesus; that grace which is infinite and universal. The length of this grace he shews in verse 3; its breadth or width, verse 4; its height, verse 5; its depth, verses 6, 7. There is some little confusion of metaphors in the last verse, where we are taught to pray—

"And sink me to perfection's height,
The depth of humble love."

The height of scriptural perfection and the depth of humble love are identical; so that he who realizes the one, cannot be a stranger to the other. Now we may *raise* a person to a height, or *sink* him into a depth; but we cannot, in strict propriety of language, speak of *sinking* any one to a *height*. In some editions the third line appears thus—

"And *raise* me to perfection's height."

The meaning of the petition however, is plain enough, and is just the same, whether we say *sink* or *raise*.

Hymn 218—"See how great a flame aspires."

219—"All thanks be to God."

These are two very animated and delightful hymns, in which we are taught to praise God for the past success of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to anticipate its universal triumph in our own country and through all the earth. They are exceedingly well adapted to Missionary services. Hymn 218 was probably written during the period of Mr. Charles Wesley's labours in and about Newcastle upon Tyne, in 1746. The imagery in the first verse may have been suggested by the large fires connected with the collieries, which illuminate the whole of that neighbourhood, even in the darkest nights. In the last verse the circumstance of the little cloud rising out of the sea and followed by abundance of rain, (1 Kings xviii., 44, 45,) is most beautifully applied to the general effusion of the Holy Spirit. Hymn 219 was composed by Mr. Charles Wesley at Gwennap in Cornwall, 11 August, 1746. On the Sabbath he had preached, with the power and demonstration of the Spirit, to vast multitudes—estimated at nine or ten thousand—who listened to him with all eagerness. His discourse lasted nearly two hours; and he broke out again and again in prayer and exhortation. Seventy years

suffering, he thought, would have been overpaid by one such opportunity.* The next day he poured out the grateful and devout feelings of his soul in this admirable hymn.

Hymn 220—"All glory to God in the sky."—

This is a hymn of high poetical merit. The writer first contemplates the nativity of Christ; then appeals to the now glorified Saviour, to come again and set up his kingdom on the earth; and beautifully sketches the blessed consequences that will result from the universal establishment of that kingdom. In the latter part of verse 2—

"Receiving its Lord from above,
The world was united to bless
The giver of concord and love,
The prince and the author of peace"—

the poet alludes to the fact, that at the time of our Lord's nativity the whole world was literally at peace. That very year, the gates of the temple of Janus at Rome, always left open during war, were shut by order of the emperor Augustus: an event which happened only three times during a period of more than seven hundred years. For a time the din of war was hushed; the various nations and tribes had laid down the weapons of destruction: all were quiet, and ready, as it were, to hail the advent of the *prince of peace*, the Redeemer of the world. The metre of this hymn

* Jackson's Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley; Vol i.
Page 442.

is very happily chosen, and the diction is smooth and harmonious.

Hymn 221 is a noble hymn of praise, in which the church militant on earth is taught to vie with the church triumphant in heaven, in ascribing glory to the triune Deity.

Hymn 222 is one of the fine compositions intended originally for the Watch-night services, which were usually protracted a little beyond the still and solemn hour of midnight. This consideration will shew the reason and the propriety of some of the expressions here used: such as,

“Our day is spent in doing good;
Our night in praise and prayer.”

“The winter’s night, and summer’s day
Glide imperceptibly away.”

On these occasions a considerable part of the night was literally spent in praise and prayer; and numbers of those who attended, would no doubt find the winter’s night gliding imperceptibly away, while engaged in such hallowed exercises.

Hymn 223—“When Israel out of Egypt came.”—This is a beautiful paraphrase, by Addison, of that most sublime composition, Psalm cxiv., and is a very fine specimen of sacred poetry.

Hymn 226—“Eternal wisdom! thee we praise.”—This is, perhaps without exception, the finest

descriptive hymn, that the excellent Watts ever wrote. It is full of splendid poetical images. The blue tinge of the sky, the sparkling gold of the stars, the noisy winds sweeping along with their sounding wings, the thunder and lightning, constituting the trumpet and the banners of Jehovah's host, the fruitful showers hanging on the thin air and then dropping their fatness, the earth with its cheerful green, its herbs and its flowers, the sea with its rough mountains and its steep billows, the blazing glories of the Divine Architect, his strength and his skill—these, altogether, form a panorama of unrivalled beauty. And to crown the whole, the poet at the close introduces the blessed Redeemer, and leads us to gaze on the divine benevolence, as exhibited in Jesus Christ. Such a conclusion stamps a Christian character on the whole of this transcendently-beautiful composition.

Hymn 227 is specially calculated to be used at the close of the day, when we are about to lie down, and it exhibits, in a most delightful way, the peace, the security and the confidence of the true Christian.

Hymn 228 is a beautiful delineation of Christian experience, and is well-adapted to the state of one, who is hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

Hymns 229, 230, 231 are three very fine birthday hymns. Hymn 230 is part, 4 verses out of

10, of a hymn composed by Mr. Charles Wesley, on his own birth-day, 18th December, 1741, Hymn 231 was also composed by him on his birth-day, probably in 1751. This last mentioned hymn exhibits the grateful and holy exultation of a minister of the gospel, in contemplating the success of his labours; his determination to give the glory to God alone, and to consecrate all his strength and all his life to so blessed a cause. Some of the verses are strikingly appropriate, when applied to the founder of Methodism: particularly the beautiful adaptation of Jacob's words—*with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands*—to the spread of that great work of God, not only throughout the British Isles, but on the American Continent.

“ With my pastoral crook I went over the brook,
And behold! I am spread into bands.”

The cheerful and lively metre accords admirably with the sentiments of the hymn. It is anapæstic, and differs from that of Hymn 205 only in this respect; that the second and fourth lines of each stanza contain each three anapæsts instead of four,—

Fröm Jēhō | vāh I cāme | Fōr hīs glō | rŷ Ĩ ām,
Ānd tō hīm | Ĩ wīth sīng | ĩng rētūr.

Here the short syllables being twice as numerous as the long ones, the movement is rapid, and the metre eminently cheerful and joyous.

CHAPTER VII.

REMARKS ON VARIOUS HYMNS, CONTINUED.

HYMNS 232 to 264 are nearly all of a general nature, and are better adapted than most of the other hymns for public worship ; there being in them but few expressions, that may not safely be put into the mouths of a promiscuous congregation. They treat mostly of the wisdom, power, justice, holiness, and benevolence of God ; always making his benevolence and love particularly prominent, and referring to the work of redemption as the most glorious exhibition and proof of that love.

Hymn 232 is a beautiful and spirited paraphrase of Psalm cxlviii. 12, 13 ; in which the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is interwoven with the invitation to all creatures to unite in praise and thanksgiving.

Hymns 235, 236, 237 constitute one of the finest paraphrases of the Lord's prayer, ever composed.

Hymns 240, 241 on the attributes of God, are grand and dignified, solemn and devout. "This is (says Mr. Love) an awe-inspiring hymn ;

serious without being heavy ; bold without being extravagant. Either to sing or read it devoutly brings God so immediately before one, that the mind becomes filled with adoring awe. After descriptions of the vast power of Jehovah, of his providence and goodness and wisdom ; and after representing justice and truth as standing before him, how delightfully the following lines are introduced—

“ Yet nearer to thy sacred throne,
Mercy withholds thy lifted hand.”—

Two lines in this hymn are borrowed from Brady and Tate’s version of Psalm ciii.

“ Thy waken’d wrath doth slowly move,
Thy willing mercy flies apace.”—

When this fine hymn, or any part of it, is used for public worship, the last four lines of verse 1, beginning—“ While thee, all-infinite, I set, ” should by all means be omitted. (See Page 131.)

Hymns 242, 243, 244, 245 are all excellent, instructive and encouraging. The metre in which they are written has a perpetual alternation of short and long syllables, but with a majority of the latter. Each couplet consists of thirteen syllables, seven long and six short ; with this exception, that the latter line of the third couplet, or the sixth line of the hymn, has one, or, in some hymns, two additional syllables.

Thus in Hymn 243—

Thōū | mǔ Gōd | ărt gōōd | ănd wīse,
 Ǽnd īn | fīnīte | īn pōwer.

Third couplet—

Gīve | mē thȳ | cōnvērt | īng grāce,
 Thāt | ĩ māy | ōbē | diēnt prōve.

Third couplet in Hymn 245—

Nēw | thēy ēve | rȳ mōrn | īng āre,
 Ǽs fā | thērs whēn | thēir chīld | rēn crȳ.

The metre differs greatly from the anapæstic metres of Hymns 198, 205, 219, 231 and the like. It is more stately and dignified; and though often employed for cheerful subjects, for praise and thanksgiving, it may be advantageously applied to the most grave and solemn purposes; of which we have striking proof in Hymns 54, 61, 548, 552.

Hymn 246 is a beautiful adaptation of the grateful Psalmist's language, Psalm cxvi. 8, 9—to the Christian believer.

Hymn 247 is a fine exposition of part of Hannah's prayer, 1 Samuel ii., 2.

Hymn 248 is an excellent paraphrase of David's thanksgiving, 1 Chronicles xxix. 10 to 13, and these admirable sentiments are thoroughly christianized by the concluding verse, in which the poet teaches us to say,—

“And all the deity is ours,
 Through thy incarnate Son.”

Hymns 249, 250 are founded on that fine passage, Exodus xxxiv., 5, 6, 7—and many of the thoughts are borrowed from Matthew Henry's expository notes upon it. These hymns, with several others of those in the present collection, first appeared in two volumes, published by Mr. Charles Wesley in 1762, under the title of "Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures."

Hymns 251 to 262 are specially valuable as furnishing clear and correct views of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. They point out the distinct work of each of the Divine Persons, in accomplishing the salvation of fallen man; and shew how closely the belief of that doctrine is interwoven with the whole experience of the true Christian.

In Hymn 254, we have an expression, which to some appears objectionable—

"Who trust the blood of God to cleanse
Our souls from every sinful stain."—

There are also a few instances in which death is predicated, absolutely and directly, of God. Thus in

Hymn 27—"Tis done! My God hath died"—

Hymn 28—"The immortal God hath died for me"—

Hymn 470—"In daily prayer to God commend
The souls whom God expired to save"—

Hymn 614—"God for a guilty world hath died"—

Believing most firmly the true and proper deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, some persons have nevertheless doubted the propriety of employing such language; their objection being not to the sentiment, but merely to the expression. Perhaps it may be vindicated on the ground of the hypostatic union which existed in Christ, and which combined deity and humanity in one person. Hence actions or qualities proper only to deity, are sometimes in Scripture connected with human titles; as when Christ spoke of the *Son of man, which is in heaven*, while he was conversing with Nicodemus on earth. And actions or sufferings proper only to humanity, are connected with divine titles; as when the apostle Paul exhorted the elders or bishops of the church at Ephesus, to *feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood*. Whatever was done or suffered by Him, who could say with truth—*I and the Father are one*, and *he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father*—may on this ground, be affirmed of God: though it would perhaps be better to avoid expressions, which are not fully and unequivocally sanctioned by the phraseology of Scripture.

Hymn 256 beautifully connects the doctrine of the Trinity with the original creation of man, with the work of redemption, and with the state of man, as restored to the favour and image of his God.

Hymn 257 is an elegant versification of that fine passage in the Communion Service, beginning—*Glory be to God on high, &c.* Nothing can be better adapted for public worship.

Hymn 260 is a composition of great excellence and beauty, the diction being eminently choice and harmonious. The latter part of verse 2 is specially worthy of notice—

“Thee while man, the earth-born, sings,
Angels shrink within their wings;
Prostrate Seraphim above
Breathe unutterable love.”

The harsh word *shrink* is remarkably apposite, as conveying some impression of the solemn awe, approaching to terror, with which the holy angels are sometimes affected, when gazing on the glories of the godhead: and the two following lines are exquisitely soft and beautiful. There are the seraphim; but what is their posture? They are not standing up, bold and unabashed; they are not satisfied with concealing themselves behind their wings; no—they fall prostrate before the triune God. They are full of love, but they do not attempt to give utterance to their feelings; all they can do is, to breathe out silently their adorations and praises; and their very breath is love—unutterable love—love to Him, who is himself essential and infinite love. Here indeed we have noble thoughts, conveyed in fine and appropriate language.

Hymn 262—"A thousand oracles divine."—

A very spirited and elegant hymn. The poet first of all unites angels and men in the delightful work of worshipping and glorifying God, their common Maker and King. But coming to the subject of *God made flesh*, this he claims as belonging specially and properly to man, and therefore invites the most exalted seraphs to look down on *poor ransomed worms, for heaven's superior praise*. The redemption of fallen man through the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ will indeed furnish the noblest of all themes, the most fruitful subject for praise and adoration, among the heavenly hosts: it is this that will raise the gratitude and love and joy of those holy creatures to the highest degree.

Hymns 266, 267, 268 are an admirable exposition of the apostle's language, Ephesians vi. 10 to 18. They represent the Christian soldier in his complete armour, fighting against all his enemies, and coming off more than conqueror, through his Saviour's mighty aid. In the second and third of these hymns, the duties of faith and prayer are particularly enforced, in a variety of pithy and sententious sayings.

Hymn 272—"Peace, doubting heart! my God's I am."—

A very excellent hymn, abounding in Scriptural images and metaphors, and full of instruction and encouragement for the child of God. The tried and tempted Christian passes through the

deep, but is not overwhelmed ; he goes through the fire, but is not burned ; he walks on the sea, and is upborne by the waves. In verse 6 the poet takes the words of authority, addressed by our Saviour to the winds and the sea,—*Peace ; be still*,—and beautifully applies them to the circumstances of his tempted followers, and lo ! there is a sudden calm. Finally he seizes the emblem of the burning bush which Moses saw, which burned with fire but was not consumed, as typifying the final deliverance and glorification of the suffering saint.

In Hymn 275 we have a fine application and use of the doctrine contained in Psalm cx. 1, 2. We are here taught that our sins are Christ's enemies ; and being led to contemplate his character as our Advocate above, his supreme authority over all creatures, and the Father's will and purpose that all his foes shall be subdued beneath him, we are encouraged to seek and expect a complete salvation from sin, through faith in our almighty Redeemer.

Hymn 276—"Worship and thanks and blessing."—This is a very elegant and spirited hymn of gratitude and praise for deliverance in a time of persecution and danger ; and was written after one of those tumults which were frequently excited by intolerant and ungodly men, in the early days of Methodism. The metre is very uncommon, and remarkably animated. It has a

perpetual alternation of short and long syllables, but with a majority of the former; and seems to be adapted exclusively to a joyous and triumphant strain.

Hymn 277—"Jesus, the conqueror, reigns."—

In this truly magnificent hymn, the Christian soldier is encouraged to fight on, in confident expectation of final victory, under the banner of his triumphant and glorified captain. To stimulate him, the starry crown is represented as seen by the eye of faith, glittering through the skies, and held out as the gracious reward of the conqueror.

In Hymn 278 the circumstances of the combat between David and Goliath are finely applied to the conflicts of the Christian with his spiritual foes, and his coming off more than conqueror through faith in the grace and power of Christ.

Hymn 279—"Shall I, for fear of feeble man."—

This hymn might be well employed as a test, whereby to examine a minister of Jesus Christ, as to his fidelity in discharging the duties of his sacred office. It is the soliloquy of a devoted preacher of the gospel, or of a Christian missionary labouring in foreign lands; who, in spite of frowns and menaces, reproaches and persecutions, perseveres in his arduous work, animated by a high degree of zeal for the glory of God, and by ardent love for the perishing souls of his fellow-creatures.

Hymn 281—"Are there not in the labourer's day."—

282—"But can it be, that I should prove."—

These hymns are admirably adapted to the case of the Christian pressing onward in the path of duty, amidst conflicts and discouragements, difficulties and dangers, but still trusting in his God and Saviour. Some of the expressions are very strong, and carry us far beyond the expectations, and in fact beyond the desires, of many professors—

"Not all the powers of hell can fright
A soul that walks with Christ in light;
He walks, and cannot fall."—

"And I, who dare thy word receive,
Without committing sin shall live"—

"While still to thee for help I call,
Thou wilt not suffer me to fall,
Thou canst not let me sin."—

This language however may be justified by the sayings of the inspired apostle—*Whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not—whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.* And it should be observed, that the poet makes these strong assertions, exclusively concerning him who walks with Christ, who labours zealously to do the divine will, who puts all his confidence in God, and calls on him continually for help: that is, concerning the loving, obedient believer, who continues instant in prayer. To

such characters only can this language be safely applied.

In Hymns 283, 284 the poet makes a profitable application of the prayer of Moses—*I beseech thee, shew me thy glory*—and of the promise given in consequence of that prayer. At the same time he points out the superior privileges bestowed, under the gospel dispensation, on all true believers; who are more favoured than the saints of ancient days.

Hymn 287 is a beautiful evening hymn, in which the Christian claims the special care and protection of Divine Providence, during the defenceless hours of sleep.

Hymns 289, 290, 291 are particularly adapted to seasons of temptation, perplexity and distress.

Hymn 293 represents the Christian pilgrim, journeying through the wilderness of this world toward the heavenly Canaan, fighting valiantly under the command of the Captain of his salvation, and triumphing over lust and passion, appetite and pride, and all his spiritual foes; even as Israel of old triumphed over the gigantic and formidable sons of Anak.

Hymn 294—"Jesus, thou sovereign Lord of all."—A fine hymn on the necessity and the efficacy of prayer. One of the expressions in verse 4 is remarkably strong—"To urge our God-commanding plea,"—but the authority for this idea is found in Isaiah xlv. 11, where Jehovah, the

Holy One of Israel and his Maker, says,—
Concerning the work of my hands, command ye me.

In the last verse we are taught to sing,—

“We ask the constant power to pray;
Indulge us, Lord, in this request,
Thou canst not then deny the rest.”

When we consider the great and comprehensive promises of blessings to be bestowed in answer to prayer, it is not too much to affirm, that if we only obtain the gift of the indwelling Spirit and the constant power to pray, asking the Father in the name of Jesus Christ, no request that we offer, will or can be denied.

Hymn 298—“O wondrous power of faithful prayer!”—
This hymn beautifully illustrates the efficacy of prayer, as exemplified in the case of Moses interceding for the Israelites. God was greatly displeased with his people because of their sin in worshipping the golden calf, and was about to punish them in the most awful way. Hence he said to Moses—*Let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them.* This language evidently implied, that God could not proceed in his work of punishment, unless Moses would *let him alone*, unless Moses would refrain from praying and interceding on behalf of his brethren. So undoubtedly Moses understood it; and therefore instead of sitting down quietly, and leaving matters to take their course, he betook himself to earnest prayer, pleaded with

all his might, and did not desist, till the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people. Thus by the prayers of Moses the hands of Omnipotence were tied, and Jehovah himself could not resist the importunate and believing intercessions of his servant. From this the poet naturally passes on to the all-prevalent intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ. In verse 2 we have a very strong expression—

“ My Son is in my servant’s prayer,
And Jesus forces me to spare.”

To some this language may appear objectionable, as giving countenance to the notion, which the Socinians unjustly associate with the doctrine of the atonement of Christ; namely, that the Father is reluctant to display his mercy towards sinners, being more inclined to the rigour of justice; and that there is more benevolence in the Son, than in the Father. But it should be remembered, that it was a display of infinite benevolence in the Father to devise a plan for the recovery of fallen man, and to give his only-begotten Son to carry that plan into effect. For our redemption and salvation we are as much indebted to the compassionate provisions of the Father, as to the meritorious undertakings of the Son. All the meaning that we can properly attach to the expression, is, that the Father will not and cannot disregard the intercession of the Son. Through him and for his sake, he will spare the guilty.

Hymn 299—"Jesus, thou hast bid us pray."—

This hymn beautifully applies the first promise of a Saviour ever given to fallen man, Genesis iii. 15; and teaches the Christian to plead earnestly with the Redeemer for the accomplishment of his own proper work, in bruising the head of the infernal serpent. Accordingly, the burden of every verse is,

"O avenge us of our foe,
And bruise the serpent's head."

Hymn 300 proposes the Saviour himself as a model, to be imitated by his disciples. It teaches us to pray that we may have in us a zeal for God, a pity for mankind, a burning charity, similar to that which dwelt in him; so shall that mind be in us, which was also in Christ Jesus.

Hymn 301 specifies in detail several of the most important blessings essential to our spiritual prosperity. Were we to consider the Redeemer as proposing to any of us the same enquiry, as he did to one of old—*What wilt thou, that I should do unto thee?*—we might here find an appropriate and a comprehensive answer.

Hymn 302 is an excellent prayer for simplicity and humility.

Hymn 304 is a fine and profitable application of some of our Lord's beatitudes; in which we are taught to pray for poverty of spirit, for meekness, for a hungering and thirsting after righteousness, for a merciful disposition, for

purity of heart, and for a sanctified use of persecutions and afflictions.

The hymns for believers watching, 305 to 320, possess a high degree of excellence. Nothing can be better adapted to the state of the Christian, who is properly alive to his danger, standing on his guard against all his spiritual foes, conscious of his own feebleness and insufficiency, and looking for constant supplies of wisdom, grace and strength from above.

Hymn 307—"God of all grace and majesty."—

This hymn admirably describes the humble, self-distrusting frame of mind, suitable to the Christian believer; who, while living in the enjoyment of the divine favour, does not abuse his privileges, does not pervert the grace of God to licentious purposes; but maintains a godly jealousy over himself. Verse 5 is one of peculiar beauty, both in sentiment and in diction.

Hymn 308—"I want a principle within."—

In verse 3 of this fine and instructive hymn, the poet introduces one of his strong and bold expressions—

"And let me weep my life away,
For having grieved thy love."

Perhaps all that is intended, is, Let me always, even to the end of life, retain an humbling and a sorrowful recollection of my past folly and unfaithfulness. Such feelings will tend to shew

the propriety of the apostolical sentiment in reference to true Christians—as *sorrowful, yet always rejoicing*. And the language of the poet, when thus understood, implies nothing more than what is expressed, Ezekiel xvi. 63—that *thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God*.

Hymn 314—"Hark! how the watchmen cry."—

Hymn 315—"Angels your march oppose."—

These are two noble hymns, breathing the true spirit of the Christian warrior. The ministers of the gospel are represented as the watchmen and the standard-bearers, summoning the forces of Emmanuel to the holy war; and faithful Christians, as following Jesus, the captain of their salvation, and in his name triumphing over Satan and all the powers of darkness. There is great beauty and strength of diction in both these hymns. In the last stanza of Hymn 314, there is a vehemence of expression and a harshness of sound, which accord remarkably well with the sentiments expressed, as to the expulsion of the disobedient angels from heaven.

"From thrones of glory driven,
By flaming vengeance hurled,
They throng the air, and darken heaven,
And rule the lower world."

What a striking contrast do these lines present

to the easy, smooth and gentle flow of the preceding verse—

“ All power to him is given ;
 He ever reigns the same ;
 Salvation, happiness, and heaven
 Are all in Jesu’s name.”

In verse 3 of Hymn 315, we have two remarkable lines—

“ By all hell’s host withstood,
 We all hell’s host o’erthrow.”

Here instead of the regular movement of three iammbuses, each consisting of a short syllable followed by a long one, we have in the first line, an iambus, a spondee, an iambus; in the second line, an iambus and two spondees—

By āll | hēll’s hōst | wīthstōod
 Wē āll | hēll’s hōst | ōerthrōw

The three consecutive long syllables—āll hēll’s hōst—comprising two strongly-aspirated words—hell’s—host—give an appropriate harshness to these lines, so that it is somewhat difficult to read them, and we are compelled to do it in a slow, cautious and solemn way, admirably comporting with the idea of a laborious and successful opposition to our spiritual foes.

Some have thought that the union of the epithets *meek* and *angry*, as applied to the Lamb of God in verse 3, is rather incongruous—

“ Jesus, the meek, the angry Lamb,
 A lion is in fight ”

Meekness, patience, gentleness are certainly the usual characteristics of the Lamb, and those with which we commonly invest the Redeemer, when we contemplate him under that emblem. And yet it must be remembered, that in the same portion of Holy Writ, in which Jesus Christ is represented as the Lamb that was slain, we also read of the *wrath* of the Lamb. Gracious and benevolent and merciful as we know the Redeemer to be, there are nevertheless those towards whom, in the final judgment, he will manifest his wrath; and when the great day of his wrath shall come, who then shall be able to stand?

Hymn 316—"Eternal Power, whose high abode."—This excellent hymn by Dr. Watts, is admirably descriptive of the reverential awe and profound abasement of soul, with which our devotional exercises ought to be conducted. In it the unparalleled glory and majesty of Jehovah are finely contrasted with earth and ashes, sin and dust; and the most exalted creatures in the universe are represented, in perfect accordance with Scripture, as hiding their faces and falling prostrate before the Almighty. There is a thought in the first verse, which is truly sublime, and deserving of more particular notice. The high abode of the Eternal is described as being,

"Infinite lengths beyond the bounds,
Where stars revolve their little rounds."

Now what are those rounds of the stars, which are here denominated *little*? The term *stars* may be properly understood as including all the heavenly bodies, exclusive of the sun and the moon; as it is evidently to be taken in the Mosaic account of the creation, Genesis i. 16. And what are the orbits of these bodies? Some of them are so amazingly extensive, that although we can express their dimensions in figures and in words, the human mind cannot form any adequate idea thereof, but is overwhelmed and bewildered by the subject. The orbit of the planet Jupiter stretches over a portion of space nearly a thousand millions of miles in diameter; that of Saturn is about 1,800 millions of miles in diameter, and that of Herschel about 3,600 millions of miles. One of the comets, whose appearances have been particularly noticed, and its term calculated with a considerable degree of accuracy, is known to take 75 years in going through its irregular orbit round the sun; and how many thousands of millions of miles it travels in that period, who can say? Yet all these astonishing and inconceivably-extensive fields of space, compared with which the greatest distances that can be measured on our terra-queous globe, are like a grain of sand to the whole earth, or a drop of water to the whole ocean—even these, vast and all-but-unbounded as they are, our poet presumes to call *little rounds*.

In themselves, and as far as we are capable of forming any judgment concerning them, they are great, immense, amazing rounds; but as compared with the ever-blessed God, they are little and insignificant: for finite compared with infinite, the creature compared with the Creator, must always be little.

Hymn 318—"A charge to keep I have."—

A very solemn and weighty composition; well calculated to arouse the most careless and stupid; to sound an alarm in the ears of the sleeping sinner, and to stimulate the believer to greater diligence and zeal.

The hymns for believers working, 321 to 328, are highly instructive, and point out the spirit and temper in which Christians ought to prosecute all their worldly engagements. While we are employed in domestic cares, or in public concerns of any description, it would be well were we always to familiarize ourselves with the sentiments and feelings here expressed. Some of the expressions in Hymns 321, 322 are very strong, and imply the possession of a high degree of grace—

"End of my every action thou;

In all things thee I see."—

"And all I think, or speak, or do

Is one great sacrifice."

But this is unquestionably the calling and the privilege of every disciple of Christ; and when

we have made a full surrender of our hearts to him, who has bought us with a price—when we love our God supremely, and the life that we live in the flesh, we live by faith in the Son of God—then we may, with propriety and truth, adopt such language as our own. If we have not yet attained these blessings, we should turn such expressions into petitions, and earnestly pray that we may soon realize all that is implied therein.

Hymn 325 is a very beautiful and instructive composition. They who are much occupied in domestic concerns and in secular engagements, may advantageously refer to it as a standard, whereby to regulate their experience and practice. It shews how we may go through all our duties in a truly-christian spirit, and how, in the midst of outward excitement and tumult, we may preserve inward tranquillity and peace.

In Hymn 326 the poet considers the Israelites passing through the wilderness towards the promised land, as emblematical of the people of God, travelling through the wilderness of this world towards the heavenly Canaan, guided and protected by the Providence and by the Spirit of God. That divine personage, who appeared of old to Joshua, declaring himself to be the Captain of the Lord's host, is still present with his faithful and obedient people; and with such a friend and protector, they have nothing to

fear. The meaning of one line in verse 2, has by some been misapprehended—

“ We shall not full direction need.”

Some have supposed these words to mean—We shall not need *full* direction; that is, we shall need only *partial* and *occasional* direction, not such as is full and constant. Whereas the poet's intention undoubtedly was, to use the verb *need*, in the sense of lacking, being destitute of—that is, we shall not lack full direction—we shall not be destitute of it—we shall not be left without it: in other words, *we shall have* full direction; such direction as is complete, sufficient, constant.

Hymn 328—“ When quiet in my house I sit.”—

This is a very fine hymn on the excellency of the Holy Scriptures, and on their proper use and application. Verse 3 possesses a more than ordinary degree of poetical beauty, and is rather too refined and elevated for general or indiscriminate use. Delightful indeed is the picture of the Christian, as here sketched by the masterly hand of our poet. In the evening he lies down to rest, composing himself on the bosom of his Lord, and sinks away to sleep in blissful dreams and visions; then in the morning he rises to publish his Saviour's praise, his tongue and his heart are filled with the word of grace, his life is filled with holy love, and thus he is preparing to join the church triumphant.

The Hymns for believers suffering, 329 to 339, are all very excellent both in sentiment and in language; and are well calculated to shew us how, amid scenes of affliction and sorrow, we may exhibit the value and efficacy of the religion of Jesus Christ.

Hymn 329 beautifully applies the history of the three Hebrews in Babylon, cast into the burning fiery furnace, and there by the mighty power of God preserved uninjured, and favoured with the presence of the Son of God.

Hymn 330—"Saviour of all, what hast thou done."—

In this fine and instructive hymn the Lord Jesus is presented to our view not only in his sacrificial character, but also as a pattern, which we are called to imitate. Thus the suffering disciple learns to be conformed to his suffering master; seeks and acquires that mind, which was in Christ; and finally takes his flight from Calvary to Zion, from a world of sorrow to the abode of eternal glory and bliss.

Hymn 331 was written to be used on returning from a journey, and it contains many appropriate and important petitions.

Hymn 333—"Come on, my partners in distress."—

Among hymns adapted to the circumstances of the tried and afflicted people of God, this holds a very distinguished rank, and has few, if any, parallels. "It anticipates the strains, (says

Montgomery) and is written almost in the spirit, of the church triumphant." The faithful disciple of Christ is contemplated as escaping beyond the reach of griefs and fears, conflicts and sufferings—ascending into glory, sitting down by the side of his divine master, wearing the never-fading crown, enjoying the beatific vision, mingling in the praises of the heavenly hosts, falling prostrate in silent adoration. And so thoroughly does the poet enter into his subject, that the reader is carried forward, as it were, unconsciously, into the midst of these glorious scenes, till he almost forgets that he is still dwelling among frail mortals, and is ready to imagine, that he has been transported into the celestial regions.

Hymns 338, 339 are compositions of superior beauty and excellence, and abound in petitions, admirably adapted to the circumstances of the suffering Christian.

CHAPTER VIII.

REMARKS ON VARIOUS HYMNS, CONTINUED.

THE hymns in Sections 7 and 8, from 340 to 440, constitute one of the most valuable and most important portions of the whole volume. In addition to the general observations on these hymns already made, (page 57, &c.,) we may notice that Christian perfection may be viewed in a great variety of scriptural aspects, all tending to illustrate its nature, its advantages, its necessity. It may be viewed as a salvation from all sin, a redemption from all iniquity; and where can we find this more correctly or more beautifully described, than in these hymns?

“ My soul shall then, like thine,
Abhor the thing unclean,
And sanctified by love divine,
For ever cease from sin.”

“ When thou the work of faith hast wrought,
I shall be pure within,
Nor sin in deed, or word, or thought;
For angels never sin.”

“ Saviour from sin, we thee receive,
From all indwelling sin.”—

“From all iniquity, from all,
He shall my soul redeem.”—

“Be it according to thy word;
Redeem me from all sin.”—

“God shall in thy flesh appear,
And make an end of sin.”—

Or it may be regarded as implying the complete sanctification of all our powers, and their unreserved consecration to the service of God. Here we find the sanctification of the will, implying its uniform and complete accordance with the divine will—

“I ask in confidence the grace,
That I may do thy will,
As angels, who behold thy face,
And all thy words fulfil.”

“And I shall do thy will on earth,
As angels do in heaven.”

“I shall suffer and fulfil
All my Father’s gracious will.”

“My will be swallow’d up in thee.”—

Here we have also the sanctification of the affections, implying the subjugation and destruction of all evil propensities—

“Come, Lord, and form my soul anew,
Emptied of pride, and wrath, and hell.”—

“Be anger to my soul unknown;
Hate, envy, jealousy, be gone;
In love create thou all things new.”

“Refining fire, go through my heart,
 Illuminate my soul;
 Scatter thy life through every part,
 And sanctify the whole.”

“My spirit meek, my will resign’d;
 Lowly as thine shall be my mind;
 The servant shall be as his Lord.”

“Now, Father, let the gracious shower
 Descend, and make me pure from sin.”—

“Cleanse me from every sinful thought,
 From all the filth of self and pride.”—

Or if we regard Christian perfection as denoting the cheerful and unreserved dedication of all our ransomed powers to the service of our God and Saviour, where can we find this so admirably described as in Hymns 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431?

What can be more excellent, either in sentiment or in language, than the following lines?

“Up to thee our souls we raise,
 Up to thee our bodies yield.”

“Meet it is and just, and right,
 That we should be wholly thine,
 In thy only will delight,
 In thy blessed service join.”

“The Christian lives to Christ alone,
 To Christ alone he dies.”

“All my actions sanctify;
 All my words and thoughts receive;

Claim me for thy service ; claim
All I have, and all I am."

" Take my soul and body's powers ;
Take my memory, mind, and will ;
All my goods, and all my hours,
All I know, and all I feel ;
All I think, or speak, or do ;
Take my heart ; but make it new."

" My spirit, soul, and flesh receive,
A holy, living sacrifice ;
Small as it is, 'tis all my store ;
More should'st thou have, if I had more."

In the last verse of Hymn 340, we have a fine thought—

" Soul of my soul remain ;
Who didst for all fulfil,
In me, O Lord, fulfil again
Thy heavenly Father's will."

Christ may indeed be regarded as the *soul* of the *believer's soul* ; for he has Christ in him, Christ dwelling in his heart by faith ; and the life he now lives in the flesh, is by faith in the Son of God. Christ and the true believer become, as it were, identified ; for *he that is joined to the Lord, is one spirit*. As our mortal bodies therefore are animated, guided and governed by the immaterial and immortal principle residing within, so in the believer that inward principle is animated, guided and governed by the indwelling Saviour : it is, so to speak, Christ, who thinks and feels

and acts in him. And thus as the Redeemer did once come to do the will of his heavenly Father, by undertaking and accomplishing the glorious work of human redemption, so he again fulfils that will in all his faithful followers, by dwelling in them, and thus implanting the principle which leads to cheerful and uniform obedience. No countenance is here given to the antinomian heresy, which would teach that Christ fulfilled the law for us, that we might be at liberty to violate that law. Nor do we in fact pray, that he may now fulfil his Father's will *for* us, that is in our place, in our stead; as though our own obedience were not requisite: but that he may fulfil that will *in* us; by abiding in us, and thus leading us in the way of universal obedience and holiness.

Hymn 345—"Ye ransom'd sinners, hear."—

Here the poet applies the apostolical precept—*rejoicing in hope*—to the particular case of believers, who are seeking full redemption, and encourages them to rejoice in hope of speedily attaining that blessing. He justly represents those who oppose Christian perfection as hugging their chains, and pleading for sin and Satan; and he shews what strong and scriptural ground we have for expecting entire liberty from sin, and for expecting it now.

Hymn 346—"For ever here my rest shall be."—

In this hymn we have a forcible acknowledgment

of the necessity of the atonement of Christ, and of exclusive dependence thereupon ; with an earnest prayer that the benefits of that atonement may be realized by us in the fullest degree. It is a beautiful and edifying application of that incident in our Lord's life, his washing the feet of his disciples, and of the conversation that then ensued between him and Peter. It may advantageously be used in celebrating the Lord's supper.

Hymns 348, 349 are an elegant, spirited and truly-evangelical paraphrase of that fine prophetic chapter, Isaiah xxxv.

Hymn 350—"Holy Lamb, who thee receive."—
In verse 6 of this fine and expressive hymn, the writer beautifully refers to the atonement of Christ, as the only medium through which sinners can obtain salvation. With a poet's eye, he beholds the sacrificial Lamb as slaughtered; the fire of heaven seizes the victim; and the ascending flame shews the new, the living way, that leads to eternal glory.

Hymns 351, 353 are highly instructive compositions, and throw a flood of light on the subject of Christian perfection. In verse 1 of Hymn 351 the burden of the petition is, *Let me know that I am born of God.* But as we proceed through the hymn, our desires are enlarged and our expectations rise higher, till in the last verse our petition is, *Let me know, that I am one*

with God; an expression denoting a much deeper and fuller experience of spiritual blessings.

In these hymns we meet with two petitions, which perhaps require a little qualification.

Hymn 351—"Be anger to my soul unknown."—

353—"No anger mayest thou ever find,
No pride in my unruffled mind."

The same sentiment appears also in other hymns.—Thus,

Hymn 355—"Anger I no more shall feel."—

417—"Anger and sloth, desire and pride
This moment be subdued."—

509—"Free from anger and from pride,
Let us thus in God abide."

These expressions must be understood as referring only to *sinful anger*, and not as condemning, in an absolute and unqualified way, all anger whatsoever. For it is a divine precept—*Be ye angry and sin not*; and we are taught that our Redeemer, who knew no sin, did on one occasion at least manifest anger; for *he looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts*. Hence we infer that there may be anger, wholly unconnected with sin; anger, involving nothing contrary to holiness; anger, thoroughly consistent with supreme love to God and universal benevolence to man. That which Scripture condemns, and from which we should pray to be fully delivered, is that kind of anger

which is violent and excessive, unreasonable and uncalled-for; that kind of anger which is connected with malice, and under the influence of which, men desire and endeavour to inflict some injury on those who have provoked them. Such anger is altogether indefensible, and totally at variance with the Christian character.

Hymn 352—"Jesus, thou art our king."—

Here we are taught to contemplate the Lord Jesus, as sustaining the regal office, and to plead with him for the full establishment of his kingdom in our hearts, and the entire subjugation of all his enemies.

Hymn 355—"Jesu, shall I never be."—

From verse 5 to the end of this hymn we have an expansion of the idea contained in that precept—*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus*, and are taught in nine particulars, what the mind of Christ was. It was quiet, gentle, patient, noble, spotless, loving, thankful, constant, perfect. Such also may our mind be; for the promise is—*every one that is perfect, shall be as his master*; and the apostle declared concerning himself and his fellow-disciples—*as he is, so are we in this world*.

In Hymn 357 we have a beautiful application of that petition in our Lord's prayer—*Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven*.

Hymn 360—"Father of Jesus Christ, my Lord."—

Here we have a fine illustration and application of the apostle's argument relative to the faith of Abraham, Romans iv. 13, &c. Most excellently does the poet describe, in verses 7, 8, 9, that faith, which disregarding appearances and obstacles, improbabilities and impossibilities, looks simply and steadily at the divine promise, and relies without wavering on the power and faithfulness of God. At the same time he is careful to guard these strong views of the mighty efficacy of faith from antinomian abuse; and hence he adds in the last verse—

"Obedient faith, that waits on thee,
Thou never wilt reprove."

The faith of which he speaks is always *obedient* faith, always connected with obedience to the divine commands; and it *waits on* God, in a diligent use of the means of grace, and *waits* in confident expectation of receiving all the blessings, which God has promised. To no other kind of faith are the noble sayings of this hymn applicable.

Hymn 361—"My God, I know, I feel thee mine."—

This hymn begins by describing the case of one who holds the Redeemer, but only *with a trembling hand*, his faith being small and feeble. But as we proceed, we find him becoming more vehement in his desires, more urgent in his

petitions, more intent on securing a present blessing; and the language of his prayers in verses 4, 7, 8, 9 is such, that none can adopt it in sincerity and truth, without realizing some benefit; for they who thus *hunger and thirst after righteousness, shall assuredly be filled.*

Hymn 367—"O come and dwell in me."—

One of the expressions in this fine hymn requires notice—

"And bring the glorious liberty
From sorrow, fear, and sin."

Here Christian perfection appears to be represented as though it included a deliverance not only from guilty fear and from sin, but from sorrow. The same idea we find also in other hymns; as in Hymn 403—

"Where fear and sin and grief expire.

Cast out by perfect love."—(See Page 60.)

That it is our privilege to be completely delivered from tormenting fear and from all sin, cannot be doubted by those, whose views are fully in accordance with the declarations, precepts and promises of Scripture: but to be wholly delivered from sorrow or grief, is more than we are warranted to expect. Our Redeemer was *a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief*; and *the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. We must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God.* And sorrow and afflict-

tion are so far from being incompatible with perfect holiness and supreme love to God, that, when sanctified, they are blessed means of deepening the work of grace in the soul, and of leading the believer onward to the highest attainments in experimental religion. Possibly all the meaning that the poet wished to convey by these expressions, is, that we may be delivered from all that sorrow and trouble, which are the result of inward corruption and depravity, not yet subdued, not yet extirpated; and that when we are fully sanctified to God, all trouble, fear and grief of that sort are at an end.

Hymn 368 is a composition of great beauty and excellence, abounding in elegant diction and poetical images, and finely exhibiting the privileges of Christian believers.

Hymns 373 to 380 are exquisite in composition and admirable in sentiment; full of important instruction, and breathing out earnest and vehement desires after the great salvation of the gospel, salvation from all sin.

Hymn 373, bearing in the original editions the title—*Living by Christ*—dwells most delightfully on the love manifested by the Saviour toward his faithful disciples; and on the evidences and results of that love to him, which glows in their grateful breasts.

Hymns 374, 376 refer to some of the deepest and most important operations of the Holy Spirit

in the hearts of believers; as sealing them, stamping on them the divine image, bearing witness of their acceptance, giving the earnest and the pledge of the heavenly inheritance, taking full possession of them, dwelling permanently within, and thus constituting them temples of God. We are taught to plead with that gracious and divine Spirit, for the speedy fulfilment of the promises that relate to him and his work.

Hymn 375 is an appeal to the Redeemer, for the full accomplishment of the gracious purposes, for which he gave himself; that is, to *redeem us from all iniquity*, and to *purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works*. It encourages us also to rely on the promise, that *every one that is perfect, shall be as his Master*.

Hymn 377 is an application to God the Father for the promised gift of the Holy Spirit. Here the poet represents in a striking way the final issue of the salvation bestowed on believers. Already is it their privilege to bless and praise and serve God, *as the hosts above*: and ere long they are to be added to the heavenly choir, and in their strains of praise they will vie with angelic beings, and even *outsoar the first-born seraph's flight*. What noble, what sublime ideas! and how well sustained by holy Scripture! For the seraphim cannot take part in that triumphant song—*Thou wast slain and hast*

redeemed us to God by thy blood. Here ransomed worms of the earth will take the lead; will sing, as it were, the first part, commencing the joyous strain; while the holy angels will join with them in the never-ending chorus, and all unitedly will ascribe blessing and honour and glory and power, unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

Hymn 379—"O Love, I languish at thy stay."—

This fine hymn presents to our view, in a great variety of figures and images, the nature and the blessedness of pure and undefiled religion. Its very essence is love—the love of God shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost given to us; it is Christ in us, the hope of glory; and he who secures this religion, will find in it all that he needs, for body and for soul, for time and for eternity.

Hymn 380—"Prisoners of hope, lift up your heads."—

An admirable hymn, full of instruction and encouragement for those who are seeking deliverance from inbred sin. It teaches us to take the promises of God, and to plead earnestly and confidently for their fulfilment. In the last 3 verses, our attention is fixed especially on those passages, in which we are taught that *the disciple shall be as his master, and the servant as his lord, and that every one that is perfect, shall be as his master.* These gracious declarations are

beautifully expanded in verse 8; all considerations about the time and the manner of their fulfilment are set aside, and we are led simply to rely on the word of promise given by him who is faithful and true; knowing that none of his words can possibly fail.

In Hymns 382, 383 we have a fine application of that passage, Zechariah iv. 7, &c., to the case of the believer, who is seeking full salvation. Indwelling sin, which is particularly described in verse 2, is regarded as a great mountain, not to be moved by human might or power, but flowing down, sinking into a plain, before the Redeemer: for *if thou canst believe*, says our Lord, *all things are possible to him that believeth*.

Hymn 385—"Love divine, all loves excelling."—

This is an admirable hymn on the value and importance of divine love—that love, which is the fulfilling of the law, the sum and substance of all the commandments of God. And here in our petitions we are led forward delightfully from grace to grace, to perfect love, to full salvation, to final glory.

In the old editions this hymn has four verses, the second of which stood thus—

"Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit
Into every troubled breast;
Let us all in thee inherit,
Let us find that second rest.

“Take away the power of sinning ;
 Alpha and Omega be ;
 End of faith as its beginning,
 Set our hearts at liberty.”

That expression—*take away the power of sinning*—would by most persons be deemed objectionable and improper. In some editions it has been thus altered—

“Take away our bent to sinning.”—

In others—

“Take away the love of sinning.”—

Perhaps all that the poet meant is—Take away all the remaining corruption and depravity of our hearts, so that there may be nothing within, that is likely to lead us into sin. For if more than this be intended, it should be remembered, that in all who are in a state of probation, the power of sinning is co-ordinate with the power of obeying ; the one cannot exist without the other. To take away, absolutely, the power of sinning, would be to deprive us of our free agency, and of course to destroy our accountability. Probably because of that line, the whole verse is omitted in the late editions.

Hymn 386 is an elegant paraphrase on that beautiful and highly-poetical passage, Isaiah li. 9, 10, 11. Here full redemption is considered as implying a complete deliverance from pain and anguish, care and sorrow, from all the evils of

this probationary state, and from all the assaults of our spiritual foes. Thus believers are represented as *groaning within* themselves, *being burdened*, and as *waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body*. And full redemption, when understood in this sense, is not attainable on earth, but is one great object of joyous anticipation with the people of God. They expect it, they wait for it, and in due time they shall receive it.

Hymn 390—"Since the Son hath made me free."—This excellent hymn contains distinct addresses to each person of the sacred Trinity; and laying hold firmly on the advocacy of the Lord Jesus, it raises our expectations to the highest degree of confidence, and emboldens us to use that strong language—

"Lord I will not let thee go,
Till the blessing thou bestow:

* * * * *

Bless me; for I will prevail."

The spirit which breathes through this verse, is precisely that which our Saviour commended in the parable of the importunate widow; and the language is not stronger or bolder than that which was employed by Jacob, when he said to the divine Angel, with whom he wrestled—*I will not let thee go, except thou bless me*. This is that *force*, that *violence*, to which our Lord refers,

when he tells us that *the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.*

In Hymns 391, 392, 393, the poet applies to the best purpose some of the most gracious promises ever made under the old or Jewish dispensation, Ezekiel xxxvi. 25, &c. The various parts of that passage furnish matter for many earnest petitions; and those petitions illustrate the nature and tendency of that entire holiness, which we are encouraged to seek. Nothing can shew more strikingly than verses 2, 3, 4, of Hymn 393, that the perfection held forth in these hymns is inseparably connected with profound humility; for when we gain perfection's height, we fall into nothing, and Christ is all in all.

Hymn 394—"O God of our forefathers, hear."—

In this fine devotional hymn we are taught to lay hold of the atonement and intercession of Christ, and on this ground to claim and expect all that more abundant life, which he came to impart; that full sanctification, which God has promised to bestow.

Hymns 395, 396, 397, are all excellent compositions, addressed to the Redeemer. They teach us to plead with him, as being now, in power and goodness, faithfulness and love, just the same as he was in the days of his flesh; an almighty, omnipresent, and infinitely-gracious

Saviour; able and willing to save every sinner, to save him now, to save him fully and for ever. These hymns give a due prominence to that blessed truth, that we may have not only a *complete*, but a *present* salvation; that whatever we need *now*, we may obtain *now*; and they are calculated to encourage our determination not to rest, till we have realized all that the Redeemer is able and willing to communicate.

Hymn 400—"Jesus comes with all his grace."—

Here Christians are taught to exult in grateful recollection of what their Redeemer has already done for them, and to rejoice in anticipation of still greater blessings.

Hymn 401—"All things are possible to him."—

In this hymn the poet takes up our Saviour's gracious declaration—*If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth*—applies it to the case of the child of God, who is seeking full salvation, and encourages him to expect that in spite of all the difficulties and obstacles lying in the way, this blessed experience shall be realized by him. We should hardly have been aware, had not the poet taught us, of the propriety and advantage of thus applying this, and many other passages of Holy Writ.

This hymn indeed contains some very bold expressions, and some sentiments that appear quite paradoxical. Thus in verse 2,

“The most impossible of all
 Is, that I e’er from sin should cease ;
 Yet shall it be, I know it shall ;
 Jesus, look to thy faithfulness !”

It may be questioned, whether, in strict propriety of language, impossibility admits of any degrees ; whether among things impossible, one can be more impossible than another. But the word is here to be understood as denoting that which is exceedingly difficult and altogether improbable. And thus we see the triumph of faith. It rises above obstacles and discouragements, improbabilities and impossibilities ; and relying on the almighty power and inviolable faithfulness of God, rests calmly in the persuasion, that the blessing shall be imparted, that the promise shall be fulfilled, and that according to our faith, it shall be done to us. Hence the poet, having contemplated the object to be attained, namely, an entire cessation from sin, in all its magnitude, in all its difficulty, in all its apparent impossibility, proceeds to say—

“Yet shall it be ; I know it shall ”—

and in verse 3,—

“The Lamb shall take my sins away ;
 ’Tis certain, though impossible :
 The thing impossible, shall be ;
 All things are possible to me.”

These sayings, however paradoxical they may

appear, are fraught with important truth. Such a salvation, though impossible according to merely human and natural considerations, is certain according to the principles of the glorious gospel; though impossible to the eye of sense, it is certain to the eye of faith; though impossible to the carnal and unregenerate man, it is certain to the believer in Christ. Fixing our attention on the difficulties and discouragements which lie in the way, we should say, the attainment of these blessings is impossible; but turning away from such views, and fixing our attention on the promises of the gospel, and on the character of him who has given those promises, we say, these blessings are attainable, and if we seek them in God's own way, their attainment becomes certain.

That line in verse 2—"Jesus, look to thy faithfulness"—is a very bold appeal to the Saviour, and appears to some irreverent and unwarrantable. Hence in some editions the two lines stood thus—

"Yet shall it be, I know it shall,
Through Jesu's all-sufficient grace."

We have in Scripture some bold appeals to the Lord Jehovah, and even expostulations with him, which do not appear to have been displeasing in his sight; particularly in the case of Moses interceding on behalf of the Israelites; Exodus xxxii. 11, &c., and Numbers xiv. 13, &c. God condescends to invite his creatures, saying—

Put me in remembrance ; let us plead together.
 And the faithfulness of God and of our Redeemer, his faithfulness in fulfilling his promises and making good all his engagements, is one great source of encouragement and consolation, to which we may at all times resort.

Hymn 403—"Lord, I believe a rest remains."—

Here the poet considers the rest of the Christian believer, as comprehending a full deliverance from inbred sin. This blessed state of experience does indeed introduce us into a deeper, a more complete, a more sacred rest, than that enjoyed by the ordinary Christian; and in this hymn we are carried onward, eagerly pursuing it, ardently panting after it, labouring to grasp it, resolved not to be satisfied without it. Nothing can more strikingly describe this eager, anxious, resolute pursuit of the blessing, than the 3rd and following verses. He who makes this language his own, realizing what is therein expressed, cannot fail to attain a high degree of grace: for they who thus ask, shall receive; they who thus seek, shall infallibly find.

Hymn 404—"O glorious hope of perfect love."—

This delightful hymn is another illustration, like hymn 345, of that apostolical sentiment, *rejoicing in hope*. Here the Christian is taken by our poet to the top of the mountain; from which, like Moses from Mount Pisgah, he views

the promised land, the spiritual Canaan, the land of perfect love—lying beyond the howling wilderness, beyond the dominion of our foes, the carnal mind and the inbred sin—at the termination of our legal years, our term of comparative nonage or immaturity; the land from which all sinful sorrows and doubts and fears are excluded. Animated by the glorious prospect, ravished with a taste of the heavenly banquet, and fully persuaded that this blissful inheritance is intended for him, the believer claims the immediate fulfilment of the promises of his God, and appeals to his Divine Saviour, his Joshua, to bring him in at once, without any further delay. The spirit of Joshua and Caleb, who said—*Let us go up at once and possess the land, for we are well able to overcome it*—breathes through the whole of this admirable composition.

Hymn 405 is much of the same stamp as the preceding one. In the last two verses, eager desire and confident expectation rise to the highest pitch. These are strikingly indicated by the earnest and vehement repetition of the most prominent words—*My God, my God—fulfil, fulfil—large desires, large as infinity—give, give—all, all*. This is unquestionably the language of nature and of truth.

Hymn 407—"None is like Jeshurun's God."—

Here we have a very fine and elegant paraphrase

of the dying testimony of Moses, as to the blessedness of Israel. The truly-poetical spirit of the original passage is seized by our bard, and the noble sentiments of the Jewish legislator are clothed with additional beauty and dignity, when applied to the superior privileges of Christians, and especially of Christians, wholly sanctified to God. One of the expressions in verse 4 requires some qualification—

“ All the struggle then is o’er,
And wars and fightings cease.”—

This cannot be understood as implying that the believer may while on earth rise to a state in which there will be absolutely no struggle, no wars, no fightings. Here below we must unquestionably continue, even to the end, to fight the good fight of faith, to carry on the war against Satan and all the hosts of hell, and to struggle through all the difficulties and obstacles that may beset our path to the heavenly kingdom. These lines must therefore be interpreted as referring solely to the struggle with inbred sin, the wars and fightings consequent on the unsubdued depravity of our nature. In him who is wholly sanctified, these wars and fightings and struggles are ended.

In Hymn 409, we are taught to appeal to that almighty and all-merciful Saviour, who in the days of his flesh cast out evil spirits, and healed

those who were oppressed by Satan ; and we beseech him to display the same divine power in our souls, expelling the infernal fiend, and destroying the works of the devil.

Hymn 411—"Why not now, my God, my God."—

In this hymn we are taught to plead earnestly with God for a present salvation; as those who are determined to have the blessing which they need, now, at once, without any further delay.

In Hymn 412 we have a profitable application of that part of the history of Elijah, in which we see him contending with the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and appealing to Jehovah, as the God who answereth by fire.

Hymns 413, 414 are beautiful in composition, and abound in appropriate and important petitions.

Hymns 415, 416, 417 are all excellently adapted to the use of those, who according to the the apostle's phraseology, (Romans viii. 23; 2 Corinthians v. 2, 4) *groan* for full redemption, and are resolved to secure that invaluable privilege. Verses 4, 5, of Hymn 415 forcibly exhibit that important truth, that it is not the gifts of God merely, however great, however valuable, that can fill and satisfy the soul: it is *God himself*, who is the portion of his people.

"Give me thyself; from every boast,
From every wish set free:

Let all I am in thee be lost;
But give thyself to me.

“Thy gifts, alas! cannot suffice,
Unless thyself be given;
Thy presence makes my paradise,
And where thou art, is heaven.”

These verses correspond in sentiment with those admirable lines of Cowper—

“But O thou bounteous giver of all good!
Thou art of all thy gifts, thyself the crown.
Give what thou canst—without thee we are poor;
And with thee, rich—take what thou wilt, away.”

In Hymns 416, 417 the confidence of the believer rises higher and higher, till at length he is represented as actually laying hold of the blessing of full salvation, and rejoicing in the conscious possession thereof.

The Hymns for Believers saved, 418 to 440, are truly excellent. They most happily describe the privileges and enjoyments, the duties and responsibilities of those who are fully saved from sin, and entirely sanctified to God. They who are seeking this high state of grace, and they who profess to have attained it, may be greatly benefitted by a frequent perusal of these instructive and beautiful compositions.

Hymn 419 gives a comprehensive view of the glorious liberty enjoyed by a Christian of this stamp.

Hymn 420 is a fine comment on the apostle's language, Colossians iii. 1 to 4. The exhortations to practical piety are worthy of all possible attention; and especially, as connecting it with experimental religion. How important, how appropriate is that advice to all Christian professors—

“ Your faith by holy tempers prove;
By actions shew your sins forgiven.”

There can be no higher, safer, or happier state on earth, than that of him who enters fully into the admirable sentiments expressed in Hymns 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431. If we make this language our own, and learn to think and speak and act and live in a way consistent therewith, we shall most certainly be *vessels unto honor, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.*

Hymn 431 is a composition of superior poetical merit, and contains a most salutary caution for those who are disposed to pay too much attention to the adorning of the body with gay and costly apparel. Where can we find that better adorning, which in the sight of God is of great price, more beautifully described, or more powerfully recommended, than in verses 4, 5?

“ O never in these veils of shame,
Sad fruits of sin, my glorying be!
Clothe with salvation through thy name,
My soul, and let me put on thee!

Be living faith my costly dress,
And my best robe thy righteousness."

"Send down thy likeness from above,
And let this my adorning be;
Clothe me with wisdom, patience, love,
With lowliness and purity;
Than gold and pearls more precious far,
And brighter than the morning star."

Hymn 433—"Give me the faith which can remove."—

This hymn is admirably adapted to express the views, wishes and purposes of a faithful minister of Jesus Christ. Every one who is called to that sacred office, should labour to catch the spirit that breathes through this hymn, and to make the sentiments and the petitions his own. Ministers are here taught to pray for faith, for love, for zeal, that they may diligently and successfully prosecute their glorious work, devoting to it all their time and all their talents. They are encouraged to pray for such a measure of *boundless charity divine*, as shall inflame and fill their hearts, and shall lead them to emulate the love and the zeal of the great and the good Shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep.

Hymn 434—"Jesus, all-atoning Lamb!"—

Here we have the language of one, who happily realizes the meaning and the truth of that declaration—*he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.*

Hymn 436—"Jesu, my truth, my way."—

This is an excellent hymn, addressed throughout to the Redeemer, and full of the most important petitions. In two of the verses, 6 and 7, we have instances of alliteration, or the frequent recurrence of the same letter, such as we do not often find in the Wesleyan poetry—

"Still stir me up to strive,
With thee in strength divine."

In these two short lines, we have four words beginning with st—*still*, *stir*, *strive*, *strength*—which gives to that couplet a peculiar character, indicative of effort, opposition, and difficulty. In that line also—"Persist to save my soul"—we have the s recurring thrice—in the second syllable of *persist*, in *save* and in *soul*—which has somewhat of a similar effect.

Hymn 437 is a beautiful and elegant paraphrase of Psalm lxiii., entering fully into the spirit, views and purposes of the royal penman.

Hymns 438, 439, 440 are very valuable and instructive compositions, which first appeared in the two volumes of Hymns and Sacred Poems, published by Mr. Charles Wesley in 1749. Hymns 439, 440 are part of one of unusual length, and of great beauty and sublimity, intended "For a person called forth, to bear his testimony." "In these noble and energetic lines (says Mr. Jackson) Mr. Charles Wesley

has strikingly depicted the mighty faith, the burning love to Christ, the yearning pity for the souls of men, the heavenly-mindedness, the animating hope of future glory, which characterized his public ministry, and which not only enabled him to deliver his Lord's message before scoffing multitudes, but also carried him through his wasting labours, and the riots of Bristol, of Cornwall, of Staffordshire, of Devizes, and of Ireland, without a murmur. As a witness for Christ, he freely sacrificed his reputation as a man of letters and of genius ; and of life itself, comparatively speaking, he made no account." *

* Jackson's Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley ; Vol. i.
Page 545.

CHAPTER IX.

REMARKS ON VARIOUS HYMNS, CONTINUED.

THE hymns for believers interceding, 441 to 477, are very comprehensive, embracing almost every subject, which a Christian, in his intercessions, would feel himself concerned to bring before the throne of grace. We are taught to pray for the world at large, for the Mahometans, the Heathens, the Jews—for the lukewarm and those who have fallen into sin—for our country and our sovereign. Parents are here taught how to pray for their children; and masters, for their servants and families.

In Hymns 442, 447, 448 we lament the ravages of war, and pray for the speedy and universal establishment of the Redeemer's peaceable kingdom.

In verses 2 and 3 of Hymn 443, we have a forcible and affecting prayer on behalf of Mahometans and Unitarians; who as agreeing in the rejection of the Holy Trinity, while they profess to acknowledge the unity of the Godhead, are classed together. The poet appears to apply that prophetic passage, Revelation ix. 2, &c.,

to the rise and progress of the Mahometan imposture: and as the locusts are there represented as coming out of the smoke, and the smoke out of the bottomless pit, this probably led him to adopt that bold expression—

“The unitarian fiend expel,
And chase his doctrine back to hell.”

From hell it came, as a device of him, who is the angel of the bottomless pit, the father of lies, the great adversary of God and man. Well therefore may we pray, that this delusive and ruinous doctrine may return to hell, and there abide, that it may no longer trouble and injure the earth.

Hymns 444, 445, 446 are excellent compositions, and breathe the true Missionary spirit; that spirit, which within the last half-century has given birth to the noblest and most godlike enterprises, that ever engaged the attention of mankind; that spirit which has carried the light of the glorious gospel into distant regions, that had long been sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death. And here we are delightfully led forward to anticipate the period, when all flesh shall behold the salvation of God; when superstition and idolatry shall be finally overthrown, and every tribe of Adam's race shall bow to the sceptre of Jesus, our Emmanuel, and crown him, Lord of all.

In several lines in Hymns 444, 445, the usual regular succession of four iambuses is agreeably diversified by making the first foot a trochee. The line then begins with a long syllable, strongly accented, generally some very important word, and this is followed by two short syllables ; which arrangement gives to the whole line somewhat more than the ordinary measure of energy and animation. The following are examples, in which we also have a spondee occasionally introduced—

Lōrd ǒ | vēr āll | ĩf thōu | hāst māde—
 Whȳ ĩs | thē grāce | sō lōng | dēlāyed—
 Whēn wīll | ĩt rēach | tō āll | mǎnkīnd—
 Līght ǒf | thē wōrld | ĩllū | mīne āll—
 Sēize ās | thē pūr | chāse ǒf | thȳ blōod—
 Ēdōm | fōr thȳ | pōssēs | iōn tāke—
 Tāke fōr | thoũ dīdst | thēir rān | sōm fīnd—
 Flȳ ǒn | thē rēb | ěl sōns | ǒf mēn—
 Sēize thēm | wīth fāith | dīvīne | lȳ bōld—

Hymns 450, 451, 452 are among the finest and most affecting pieces ever written on the conversion and restoration of the Jews. Whatever opinions we entertain on this difficult question, we may safely rest in the scriptural views here exhibited, and may cordially join in the petitions furnished by our poet. When, as we pray in Hymn 452, converted Jews shall go forth through the continents and islands, as heralds of the

cross, inviting the heathens to behold the Lamb of God, then indeed may we expect the fulfilment of ancient predictions—then shall all the gentile nations meet with the myriads of Israel—then shall the mystery of God be finished, his family, complete in all its branches, be gathered into its heavenly home, and the universe be forever filled with his glory.

Hymn 461—"Saviour, to thee we humbly cry."—

Here we have an earnest prayer on behalf of those who have wandered from the paths of duty and obedience and have fallen into sin. The poet in verse 3 alludes particularly to one of the antinomian errors, which, at one period in the early days of Methodism, prevailed rather extensively, and did much mischief. Some of the Moravian teachers of that period fell into this snare; and the Wesleys and their co-adjutors, who had been on terms of great intimacy with them, found it needful to bear their testimony against this awful abuse of the doctrines of the gospel. One of their ideas was, that if a person professed faith in Christ, there was no necessity that he should manifest or feel any sorrow on account of his past or his present sins; that he should acknowledge himself to be a *happy sinner*, and rest satisfied in that state. The expression *happy sinner* being thus prostituted by that party to licentious purposes, was very

properly exposed and reprobated by our poet. Another of their errors was, that of recommending an unscriptural *stillness*; teaching people to refrain from the use of religious means and ordinances, and in this easy and indolent way to expect all needful communications of divine grace. To this delusion we have a reference in Hymn 296, verse 2—

“Place no longer let us give
To the old tempter’s will;
Never more our duty leave,
While Satan cries—*Be still.*”

Hymns 465 and 755 are as fine specimens, as were ever embodied in poetical language, of Christian loyalty, and Hymns 453, 460, 464, 466 of Christian patriotism. Hymns 453, 465 and 755 were written by Mr. Charles Wesley in 1744, and appeared originally in a tract entitled—“Hymns for Times of Trouble.” That period was eminently a time of trouble. “The country (says Mr. Jackson) was in a very unsettled state. It was at war with France and Spain; and was threatened with an invasion by the French, for the purpose of deposing the reigning monarch, George the Second, and of placing on the throne the exiled representative of the house of Stuart; under whose government it was understood, should the project succeed, popery

and arbitrary power were to be restored.”* Never was there more pure and fervent loyalty, or more genuine and disinterested patriotism, than that which characterized the Wesleys and their co-adjutors: and no men of that period contributed more than they did, to secure for their country and their sovereign the protection and blessing of the Most High.

The hymns for parents and masters, 467 to 475, exhibit in a very instructive way the important duties devolving on those who stand in such relations to others, and the evils and dangers against which they should particularly guard. They shew us, how we ought, in all our intercourse with those around us, to exhibit the power and the excellence of Christian principles. Were all parents and heads of families carefully to study these hymns, and to regulate their conduct accordingly, the most blessed results would unquestionably follow, and the religion of Jesus Christ would spread more rapidly and more extensively than ever.

The hymns for the Society meeting—giving thanks—praying—and parting—478 to 539, are exceedingly instructive and valuable.

Hymns 478, 481, 483 refer very feelingly to the diversified scenes of trouble and danger, temptation and conflict, through which Christians

*Jackson's Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley, Vol. i,
Page 359.

are frequently called to pass, the divine support and consolation granted, and the deliverances wrought out on their behalf. They express the pleasure and joy, which the true disciples of the Lord Jesus feel, when meeting each other in the house of prayer, and their confident expectations of being blessed in the diligent use of the means of grace. Happy indeed are those Christian churches, the members of which can adopt the language of these hymns as their own. They cannot fail to be in a prosperous condition.

There may be some difference of opinion as to the meaning of one expression in verse 3 of Hymn 478—

“ Which saves us to the uttermost,
Till we can sin no more.”

The same sentiment we find also in verse 2 of Hymn 524—

“ Thy kingdom in our souls restore,
And keep till we can sin no more,
Till all in thy whole image rise.”

When is it, we may enquire, that we are so saved, that *we can sin no more*? Does the poet refer to the high state of experience, realized by the mature Christian, who is rooted and grounded in love, wholly sanctified to God, and saved from all sin? The inspired apostle teaches us, that *whosoever is born of God, does not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin,*

because he is born of God. Thus the expression, if it have such an allusion, is vindicated on Scriptural ground. But it is probable that the poet refers rather to the state of glorified saints; who, having finished their probation, are placed for ever beyond the possibility of falling from grace and of sinning against their God. The impossibility of sinning, in the former case, is merely provisional and conditional; in the latter case, absolute and certain. In the former, it depends on their abiding in Christ by faith, holding the beginning of their confidence stedfast unto the end, watching and praying, and persevering in the way of obedience and holiness. In the latter case, it depends on nothing but the power, goodness and fidelity of God, and is therefore as certain as the eternity of the divine existence and the immutability of the divine character. That the words refer to the state of glorified saints, is rendered still more probable by the following verse—

“ Let us take up the cross,
Till we the crown obtain.”

It is natural to suppose that the two contiguous lines,—

“ Till we can sin no more”
and—

“ Till we the crown obtain”

refer to one and the same state, and that the

period will not arrive, till we are safely landed in Paradise.

The petitions offered up and the resolutions expressed in Hymns 479, 480, are worthy of universal adoption, and cannot be adopted by any without benefit.

In Hymn 482, the poet having offered devout praises to the Redeemer for past protection and for present blessings, leads us onward to anticipate the glories of the heavenly state—the reunion of beloved friends and relatives, parted for a season, by death—the husband and the wife, the parent and the child, meeting there to part no more. He then refers in an affecting way to some of the circumstances, which frequently occasion sorrow and distress to the believer, while on earth; such as ill-requited love, the ingratitude of those for whom we have done much, the instability and apostacy of religious professors. He introduces the pious parent, mourning over an ungodly child, as David did over Absalom; and teaches us to rejoice in considering that all these sources of trouble and suffering will then be at an end.

Hymn 486 is a forcible and striking appeal to the omnipresent and divine Saviour, claiming the fulfilment of his gracious promise—*where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them*—and encourages us to expect a present blessing.

Hymn 487 points out the advantages of

Christian communion, and shews how the union of true believers is to be perpetuated on earth, till it is consummated in heaven.

Hymns 488, 491, 499, are most delightful compositions, the metre of which is so peculiarly cheerful and lively, the language so beautiful, and the sentiments so animating, that it is scarcely possible to read or hear, far less to sing them, without being quickened and edified. The first and the second of them appeared originally in a volume, published by Mr. Charles Wesley in 1767, and entitled—"Hymns for the use of Families, and on various Occasions." In Hymn 488, written *to be sung at the tea-table*, we are taught how the ordinary intercourse of domestic life may be sanctified to the best of purposes; how we may learn to eat and drink, to the glory of God. We are there led to contemplate the Redeemer, first as bowing his head on Calvary: then as coming with clouds, attended by his holy angels, in the judgment of the great day. Our attention is fixed on his promise—*I will come again and receive you unto myself*; and we are encouraged confidently to claim the fulfilment of his gracious word, and joyfully to anticipate the period, when the disciple shall be with his Lord, to spend eternity *in a rapture of heavenly love*.

Hymn 491 is particularly adapted to the birthday of a wife or husband, or of any beloved

relative or friend; and in fact, was originally composed by Mr. Charles Wesley on occasion of his wife's birth-day, 12th October, probably in or about the year 1755. In it the church militant on earth seems already to be entering into the enjoyments of Paradise, and to be uniting in the song of the church triumphant above. Faith, mighty faith, overleaping the boundaries of time and sense, hears the rapturous shout of the saints, rising all-glorious from their tombs, and realizes the awfully-magnificent scene, which will be unfolded, when, meeting and recognizing their glorified Head, they shall with him ascend into the heaven of heavens, and take possession of the blissful mansions, prepared for them from the foundation of the world. When earthly connexions and friendships are thus sanctified, they are blessings of inestimable value. Unions thus formed, will not be dissolved by death, but will flourish in undiminished vigour, *long as eternal ages roll.*

Hymn 499 is much of the same stamp. Here the poet beautifully applies the apostle's idea, where speaking of faith, hope and love; he says, *the greatest of these is love.*

“ By faith we are come To our permanent home ;
By hope, we the rapture improve ;
By love we still rise And look down on the skies,
For the heaven of heavens is love.”

Some indeed may be of opinion, that hymns like

these are too elevated, too glowing, too impassioned; that they are better fitted for heaven than for earth, and belong rather to glorified saints, than to those who are still journeying through the wilderness of this world. If however they serve to rouse our dull affections, to animate our devotions, to prevent us from grovelling on the earth, and to stimulate us to the pursuit of perfect holiness, a most important object is secured. There is no danger that these delightful topics should be studied too frequently or too closely, provided such studies are brought to bear in favour of practical piety, and are connected with obedience to God's commands.

Hymns 492, 493 are well calculated to cherish the principle of grateful and adoring love in believers, while acknowledging the blessings already imparted, and anticipating still greater benefits. In verse 5 of Hymn 493, the operations of the Holy Spirit in the heart are viewed under the scriptural metaphor of fire; our remaining sins are the fuel, and the Spirit of burning seizes and consumes them all.

Hymn 494—"Lo! God is here! let us adore."—

This excellent hymn is admirably descriptive of those solemn, devout and reverential feelings, with which we should always enter the house of God. It is one of the best adapted hymns for public worship, in the whole volume;

although verse 3 could not perhaps be well sung by a promiscuous congregation, as it expresses resolutions which only the child of God is disposed to form, and conduct which he only can pursue. The last verse is peculiarly beautiful and highly poetical; it seizes on the image of the flowers opening their leaves, to catch the genial and vivifying rays of the sun; and teaches us to pray, that even so we may ever be waiting and eager to receive the purifying influences of the sun of righteousness.

Hymns 495 and 498 are in a very lively and cheerful metre, the same as the New-Year's-Day Hymn (See Page 107,) and can scarcely be sung or read without benefit. The former beautifully encourages believers to persevere and abound in those good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them; at the same time renouncing all idea of merit in such works, and placing their entire dependence on the atonement and merit of Jesus Christ. The latter is peculiarly adapted to seasons of trial and conflict, and cheers the Christian with the prospect of a speedy deliverance from all his troubles.

Hymn 497 represents Christians as pilgrims on earth, journeying towards the heavenly city, the new Jerusalem; and anticipates the period when the journey shall be ended, and when all the ransomed of the Lord shall meet

in their final abode, their glorious and everlasting home.

Hymn 500 describes the benefits and comforts of Christian communion on earth, and then passes on to the final issue of that communion in heaven.

The section for the Society praying, comprising Hymns 501 to 532, is excellent in a high degree. Probably there is no subject that ought ever to occupy the thoughts of a Christian church, when engaged in the solemn duty of prayer, that is not here introduced; and no blessing whatever, that can be conducive to their spiritual welfare and prosperity, for which we are not here furnished with appropriate petitions. Were the language of these hymns sincerely adopted in our prayers, and were those prayers answered in our religious experience and in our daily deportment, we should infallibly become eminent for all that is wise and holy and good; and such a Christian church would enjoy a large measure of the divine blessing and favour.

In Hymn 501 the sheep of Christ's flock are taught to seek security and protection under the care of the good Shepherd; that they may escape the assaults of the infernal wolf, may be united in affection here below, and finally associated in glory.

Hymns 502, 503, appeal to the omniscient

Redeemer, the searcher of hearts, that all remains of depravity may be taken away out of our souls, and the work of holiness completed within us. An expression in verse 2 of Hymn 503 has by some been deemed objectionable—

“When to the right or left we stray,
Leave us not comfortless.”

This might be supposed to mean, when we are wandering in the paths of disobedience, let us have comfort; and thus understood, it would be favourable to the antinomian heresy. To expect comfort in the paths of sin, is presumption and folly, for which not the least warrant can be found in Holy Scripture. But this could not be the poet's meaning. All that he intended was to pray, that, if at any time we should unhappily turn aside from the right way, we may not be left in that wretched and comfortless condition; that God may not abandon us, but may still strive with us by his good Spirit, and lead us back into the right way, the way of obedience, the way of peace.

In Hymn 504 the poet dwells on the excellence of divine love; in verse 4 he compares the love of Christ to a loadstone; the hearts of believers he represents as touched by that loadstone, and under the influence of its attractive power, they move toward Christ and toward each other. He then teaches us to pray, verses 5, 6, that we may

have all the mind that was in Christ, and that being perfected in love, we may at length be removed to paradise and to heaven. Divine love he refers to, as being the very essence of true religion, the great source of enjoyment, here and hereafter, in time and in eternity. An expression in verse 7 requires some notice—

“Grant this, and then from all below
 Insensibly remove;
 Our souls their change shall scarcely know,
 Made perfect first in love.”

With what propriety can we say—Our souls their change shall scarcely know? The change from time to eternity, from a state of probation to a state of retribution, from that which is transient and uncertain to that which is fixed and eternal—from the toils and sorrows and sufferings of earth to the glories and enjoyments of the heavenly world—must be so vast, so amazing, so much beyond all our previous experience, so far above our most sanguine hopes, as to carry with it the fullest conviction of its reality and importance. In all these respects there will unquestionably be a great and most blessed change. This indeed our poet allows and asserts elsewhere; particularly in Hymn 482, where he says,—

“O what a mighty change
 Shall Jesu’s sufferers know,
 While o’er the happy plains they range,
 Incapable of woe”—

and he there illustrates the blessedness of that change in a variety of ways. But all these things may perhaps be regarded rather as changes in the condition and circumstances of the soul, than in the soul itself. Between the state of a soul entirely sanctified and filled with divine love, and that of a soul actually admitted into paradise, the difference possibly is not so great as some imagine. The difference is in the degree, rather than in the nature and quality of its felicity; and possibly in the earlier periods of its residence in the mansions of glory, the degree of its holiness and bliss may not rise so high above what it realized on earth, as to make the poet's language appear very extravagant. Who can say how high the believer may rise even here below, in his religious experience! how largely he may partake of the divine nature! how fully he may be assimilated to the blessed God himself!

Hymn 505 is a fine prayer for peace and unity, harmony and love, among the professed disciples of Christ. The soft and easy flow of the language accords well with the sentiments expressed.

Hymn 506 is a beautiful prayer, addressed consecutively to the three persons of the god-head, pleading for the fulfilment of that gracious promise, contained in John xiv. 16, 17—even the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Hymn 507 is addressed throughout to the Divine Saviour, and appears to be an expansion

or illustration of the sentiment contained in that promise—*If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.* One line in verse 6 is peculiarly instructive and important as to the effect of faith, and at the same time beautifully expressed,—

“Faith makes thy fulness all our own”—

There is in Christ a fulness of blessings—a rich, inexhaustible and eternal supply,—

“Enough for all, enough for each,
Enough for evermore.”

By faith we put forth our hands and partake of the provision so freely set before us; we appropriate these blessings to ourselves; and thus we make that fulness *all our own*.

Hymn 508, 509 exhibit the spirit and disposition which all true believers should seek for, teaching us how they should live, and how they may expect to die.

Hymn 510 may be advantageously employed by those who are united in christian communion as members of one church, or by those who are connected by the ties of nature and relationship, as members of one family; supposing them to be in reality *kindred spirits*, all enjoying the salvation of God here, and anticipating his endless glory in the world to come. A kind, loving and affectionate spirit breathes through

the whole hymn, and the diction is smooth, elegant and beautiful.

Hymns 511, 512, 513 are excellent models for the prayers of Christian believers, and cannot be used in the proper spirit of earnest and believing prayer, without some benefit. In Hymn 513 our love to God and to the Saviour is traced back to its fountain, namely, the love of God himself—that love, which is, so to speak, the essence of the Deity—for *God is love*. It is beautifully represented as *a drop of that unbounded sea*, and as *a spark of that ethereal fire*. Verses 3 and 4 are eminently poetical and finely descriptive. We are there taught to pray, that our *drop* may be resorbed into the ocean, and lost in the immensity of divine love; that our *spark* may aspire to its great source, burn intensely for his glory, and blaze through all eternity. Here the metaphors are well sustained and strikingly applied.

Hymns 514 to 518 beautifully illustrate the communion of saints. Hymn 514 is addressed, 1st verse to the Father, 2nd to the Son, 3rd to the Holy Ghost, 4th to the three persons conjointly; and comprises petitions appropriate to each person distinctly, and to the whole unitedly. The unity of the Christian church is described, Hymn 515, verses 2, 3; the foundation on which it is built, Hymn 516, verse 1; the union between Christ and his people, verses 2, 3. Hymns 517,

518 contain a series of most appropriate and important petitions, all addressed to the Lord Jesus Christ, the great head of the church.

Hymns 519 to 522 are admirably adapted to the Love-Feast, when many of the disciples of the Lord Jesus meet together, for the purpose of bearing testimony to the glory of God, and for the encouragement and edification of their fellow travellers to the heavenly Zion, declaring what great things God hath done for their souls. Such persons may here learn what is their high and holy calling ; what is their duty, and what their privilege. They are taught that they should emulate the spirit of the ancient martyrs ; that they should regard themselves as lights in the world, as witnesses for Christ ; that they should bring forth the fruits of righteousness, exhibit the mind that was in Christ, cultivate faith and love, pursue universal and entire holiness, endure to the end, and thus secure the crown of heavenly glory. Should any enquire, What is that faith, which we profess and recommend, and of which we speak so highly, a satisfactory reply may here be found,—

“Plead we thus for faith alone,
Faith which by our works is shewn :
Active faith that lives within,
Conquers earth, and hell, and sin,
Sanctifies and makes us whole,
Forms the Saviour in the soul.”

“ Let us for this faith contend ;
Sure salvation is its end.”

The excellence of love is set forth,—

“ Let us then as brethren love ”—

“ Write thy law of love within.
Hence may all our actions flow ;
Love, the proof that Christ we know ;
Mutual love the token be,
Lord, that we belong to thee.
Love, thine image, love impart ;
Stamp it on our face and heart !”

The importance of meekness, patience, and humility is stated—

“ Plant in us thy humble mind ;
Patient, pitiful, and kind,
Meek and lowly let us be,
Full of goodness, full of thee.”

The necessity of entire holiness is also set before us—

“ Make us all in thee complete,
Make us all for glory meet,
Meet to appear before thy sight,
Partners with the saints in light.”

“ Cleanse from all unrighteousness :
Thee the unholy cannot see ;
Make, O make us meet for thee !
Every vile affection kill ;
Root out every seed of ill ;
Utterly abolish sin.”

Hymns 523 to 528 are all much of the same stamp, and abound in most excellent petitions. Happy indeed will they be, who make these petitions their own, and who realize the answer to them in their experience and practice.

Hymn 529—"Holy Lamb, who thee confess."—

Here we have an admirable delineation of practical piety. The believer is taught, after the example of his divine Master, to intermix in a proper way public and private engagements, secular and religious duties ; so that neither shall be pursued to the neglect of the other. The proper exercises of faith and love—prayer and intercourse with God, together with works of benevolence towards our fellow-creatures—getting good ourselves, and doing good to others—are presented to our view in appropriate and beautiful language. And the poet finally pushes the parallel between Christ and the believer so far, that he represents the latter, like his master, as *bowing his head* and *dying on the sacred tree* ; though the latter circumstance, *dying on the sacred tree*, is peculiar to the Redeemer, and inapplicable to his followers.

Hymns 530, 531 are addressed, the former to the Holy Spirit, the second to the Redeemer. They abound in excellent petitions, and well become those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and longing to realize the

length and breadth, the depth and height of divine love.

Hymn 532 is usually denominated *the Covenant Hymn*, being employed at the solemn service generally held on the first Sabbath in the new year, when the Wesleyan Societies are invited and encouraged publicly to renew their covenant with God. It teaches us to lay hold, by faith, of the promises of our heavenly Father, and to enter into covenant with him through Jesus Christ, so that his precious blood may be applied to us, all our sins taken away, and our names registered in the Lamb's book of life.

The Section for the Society at parting, contains some excellent hymns, 533 to 539, which breathe in an eminent degree, the spirit of Christian affection and brotherly love. The Redeemer's disciples are represented as *joyful to meet* in their religious services and duties, thus renewing their spiritual strength, thus acquiring all those supplies of divine grace which they need from time to time; and then at the close of such services *willing to part*, retiring cheerfully to their respective abodes, pursuing their accustomed duties in the name and with the blessing of their great Master, and anticipating the final meeting of all the saints of the Most High in the regions of everlasting blessedness.

In Hymn 533 a sentiment adopted in an unwarrantable and pernicious way by some of the

advocates of infidelity is wrested out of their hands, and applied to the case of true Christians.

“ We, only we, can say,
Whatever is, is best.”

Others indeed have presumed to adopt this language; but what right has the infidel, the sensualist, the careless sinner, to say so? If the kind and wise and all-controlling Providence of God be denied, then the assertion is falsified; for supposing that scheme to be true, we might say, in cases innumerable, that which really is, is not the best—a much better state of things might exist. There would, on that supposition, be no redeeming feature in the circumstances of mankind; all would be gloomy and distressing in the extreme. And the careless and impenitent sinner has no right to adopt such language, or to appropriate to himself any of the consolation, which it is calculated to yield. For allowing the existence of such providential care, the impenitent sinner places himself beyond its range, voluntarily withdraws from its influences, and relinquishes all share in its benefits. For him it is not true, that *whatever is, is best*; for him it would be inconceivably better, were he at once to abandon all his sins, return unto his heavenly Father, and enter into covenant with him through faith in the Redeemer. But the sentiment, when restricted to the true believer, is perfectly correct,

and is in fact nothing more than an inference deducible from that scriptural declaration, *all things work together for good, to them that love God.*

Hymns 535, 536, 537, though in three different metres, are all of the same stamp, and dwell most delightfully on the blessed and glorious union of the saints in the heavenly world. The cessation of all toil and grief and pain—the termination of the ravages of death—the meeting never to be succeeded by parting—the dissolution of the present earth and heavens—the falling of mountains and stars and skies—the appearance of a new world, a world of righteousness and love—the association with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the whole church of the first-born—the union of saints and angels—the beatific vision of the glorified Redeemer—his followers standing with him on Mount Zion, and taking part in the everlasting anthem, which shall resound through those realms of glory and bliss, and shall embody the grateful and triumphant acclamations of all the hosts of heaven—all these grand and magnificent ideas are worked up in these hymns in a masterly way. They who sing such compositions with the spirit and with the understanding also, cannot fail to rise above all that is earthly and temporal; while sojourning here below, they will breathe the air of Paradise, and anticipate the joys of heaven.

Hymn 538 is remarkably smooth and melo-

dious, admirably adapted to the sentiments expressed, and teaching believers how they may live as angels, while on earth.

Hymn 539 is full of excellent advices, exhortations and prayers. It encourages believers to expect the gift of the Holy Ghost, and to anticipate their final admission into Paradise. It represents them as waiting, till Christ shall come in the morning of the general resurrection, to receive all his faithful servants to himself, and to introduce them to the full and endless enjoyment of his glory. The closing lines are eminently beautiful, solemn, and affecting—

“ Live, till the Lord in glory come,
 And wait, his heaven to share :
 He now is fitting up your home :
 Go on—we’ll meet you there.”

Thus Christians are taught to stimulate and encourage one another, that they may persevere even to the end ; and at the same time they pledge themselves to be faithful, and avow their determination, by divine grace, never to turn aside, never to draw back, but to meet their brethren at the right hand of God, in the abodes of eternal blessedness.

Hymns 540, 541, 542, 544 are well adapted for public worship. Hymns 540, 541 are fine paraphrases of the one hundredth and of the eighty fourth Psalms ; and 542 is a paraphrase

of that truly excellent and devotional passage in the Communion service, beginning—*Therefore with angels and archangels, &c.*

Hymn 543 was originally published as a *Grace after Meat*. It breathes in an eminent degree the spirit of grateful and adoring love; and some of the expressions are rather too strong for a promiscuous congregation—

“Thine, only thine, we pant to be.”

“Heavenward our every wish aspires.”

If the hymn be used for public worship, the congregation should be exhorted to turn such declarations into petitions, and to pray that, by divine grace, this may become their experience.

Hymns 545 to 552 are exceedingly proper to use, in celebrating the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. They admirably point out the nature and design of that ordinance; the principles involved and the great truths exhibited therein. They present to our view the guilt, depravity and helplessness of man; the atonement effected by the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the way of access to God through his sacrifice and intercession; together with the attainment of pardon and holiness through faith in the Redeemer. They teach us to eat the sacramental bread and drink the sacramental wine, as emblems of the body of Jesus crucified for us, and of his blood poured out on

Calvary; and as representing the union subsisting between Christ and the believer, and the strength and life and consolation which the believer thus receives. These hymns are mostly, if not altogether formed on the sentiments expressed in an excellent treatise on the Lord's supper by Dr. Brevint, which was abridged and published by Mr. Wesley. The sentiments are those of Brevint, but they are embellished by Charles Wesley with all the charms of sacred poetry. At the close of the last verse of Hymn 551 we have these lines—

“To every faithful soul appear,
And shew thy real presence here,”

There is here perhaps a reference to the opinion of those Christians, who have somewhat modified the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation, by supposing that although the bread and wine in the Lord's supper are not literally converted into the body and blood of the Redeemer, there still is, in conjunction with the consecrated elements, the *real presence* of his body and blood. Discarding all such gross, carnal and unscriptural ideas, we are notwithstanding taught, that when we celebrate this Christian ordinance in a proper spirit and in the exercise of faith, we do indeed eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ; not in a corporeal, but in a mystical and spiritual way. We may expect, and we shall have his *real presence*; that is, his spiritual

presence, his manifested favour, his blessing, his salvation.

Hymn 552 is one of great poetical beauty and excellence. The writer notices, in bold and striking language, the signs and wonders accompanying or following the death of Christ. The graves are opened, the rocks are rent asunder, the earth quakes, the heavenly bodies are affected, all nature is convulsed. What is the cause of all this? The cause is this—Jesus drinks the bitter cup, tasting death for every man. He, who is truly the great Jehovah, dies. The sun is represented as sympathizing with the sufferer, and withdrawing his light—the heavens put on the livery of woe—the hosts above mourn, the very skies become sad: for he who now dies, is not only the creator of man, but the God of angels, the object of supreme adoration and love to seraphim and cherubim. In verse 2 the poet takes advantage of a rumour mentioned by Plutarch, as connected with the history of the heathen God, Pan. Plutarch states, that, in the reign of Tiberius, who was emperor of Rome at the time of our Saviour's crucifixion, an extraordinary voice was heard near some islands in the Ionian sea, which exclaimed—*The great Pan is dead*. The augurs were consulted on the occasion by the emperor, but they could not explain the meaning of this supernatural voice. Whether this was mere imagination, or gratu-

itous fiction, or a political contrivance, we cannot perhaps say; but at all events the poet applies it to good purpose. Many of the heathens paid great honors to the god Pan, whom they regarded as the source of fecundity, and as the principle or origin of all things. Hence by them the death of Pan would be considered a great and general calamity. Now all this was heathenish superstition and error. What they in their ignorance attributed to Pan, belonged really and truly to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the source and origin of all things, *the beginning of the creation of God*. Well therefore does our poet sing—

“ Dies the glorious cause of all!
 The true, eternal Pan
 Falls, to raise us from our fall,
 To rescue sinful man!”

Thus, as the Christian apostle preaching at Athens, seized that noble saying of the Greek poet Cleanthes—*We are his offspring*—addressed by him to the imaginary god, Jupiter, the supreme deity of the Greeks and Romans, and forcibly applied it to Him, to whom alone it properly belongs, even to that God, who *made the world and all things therein*, and who is *Lord of heaven and earth*; so our Christian poet seizes the story of Pan and the supernatural voice announcing his death, and applies it to the blessed Redeemer and his death. Thus what would in its original application be frivolous and

false, is dignified by being associated with divine truth, and with events of a most interesting and important character.

For this, Charles Wesley has the example of Milton ; who in his "Hymn, for the morning of Christ's nativity," says—

"The shepherds on the lawn,
Or e'er the point of dawn,
Sat simply chatting in a rustic row ;
Full little thought they then
That the mighty Pan

Was kindly come to live with them below."

We have another instance of this in that very beautiful and devotional piece, entitled "Eupolis's Hymn to the Creator ; from the Greek." This appeared originally in the Volume, published by the two brothers in 1739, under the title of "Hymns and Sacred Poems," and is generally thought to have been the production of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, Rector of Epworth. This noble address to the Deity begins thus—

"Author of being, source of light,
With unfading beauties bright,
Fulness, goodness, rolling round
Thy own fair orb without a bound :
Whether thee thy suppliants call
Truth, or good, or one, or all,
Ei or Jao ; thee we hail,
Essence that can never fail,
Grecian or Barbaric name,
Thy stedfast being still the same."

Here among the appellations given to the Deity, we have *all*, which is exactly equivalent to *Pan*, being the English translation of that Greek word. Further on in the poem, the supreme being is expressly called Pan—

“Thy herbage, O great Pan, sustains
The flocks that graze our Attic plains;
The olive, with fresh verdure crown'd,
Rises pregnant from the ground;
At thy command it shoots and springs,
And a thousand blessings brings.”

In the close of the poem we again find the same idea—

“O Father! King! whose heavenly face
Shines serene on all thy race!
We thy magnificence adore,
And thy well-known aid implore;
Nor vainly for thy help we call;
Nor can we want; for thou art all.”

Thou art all; as though he had said, The name Pan properly belongs to Thee; for Thou art the Creator and Preserver, the Benefactor and Governor of all; the Father and the Friend of the human race.

Verse 4 is solemn, pathetic and impassioned; the person reading or singing the hymn is supposed to realize the affecting scene; and lo! he feels the mortal smart; his very heart is broken; then in the meltings of his tenderness and grati-

tude, he turns to his fellow-sinners, inviting them to contemplate and to love him, who died for them. In verse 5, our meditations are turned away from the sufferings and death of Christ to his resurrection and ascension; and then sorrow gives place to joy and exultation.

Hymn 553 is a fine and spirited composition on the death and the resurrection of Christ; mourning on account of the former, but triumphing in the consideration of the latter.

Hymn 554—"Our Lord is risen from the dead."—

This is a truly beautiful and magnificent hymn. The fine poetical imagery of Psalm xxiv. 7 to 10, is the foundation, and suggests the principal ideas. This sacred song was probably composed, like Psalm lxviii., on that joyous occasion, when the ark of the covenant was removed from the house of Obed-Edom into the city of David. On the former removal of the ark from the house of Abinadab at Gibeah, David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord on various musical instruments; and when, after remaining three months in the house of Obed-Edom, the ark was taken to Jerusalem, and deposited in the tabernacle that had been prepared for it, it was a season of great rejoicing; the pious monarch dancing before the Lord with all his might, burnt-offerings and peace-offerings being presented, with shouting and the sound of the

trumpet. One party appearing with the ark, before the gates of the city, would probably repeat verse 7—*Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.* Another party, within the gates, would then propose the enquiry in verse 8—*Who is this King of glory?* The question would be duly answered by the party outside—*The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.* Then, a second time, the demand of admission would be made, the enquiry proposed, and the answer returned; as in verses 9, 10. In a far more interesting and more sublime way, we may suppose something of this kind to have occurred, when our blessed Redeemer having accomplished the great work of human redemption, ascended on high, and with his glorified human body re-entered the heavenly world. He is represented as riding in his triumphal chariot, leading captive the powers of hell, arriving at the portals of the celestial city. Attendant angels chant his praises, and demand on his behalf, that the gates shall be thrown wide open, that the everlasting doors shall be lifted up, and that he shall be solemnly ushered into those mansions, which he claims as his own. The enquiry is then raised, *Who is this King of glory?* In reply, his name is given, and some of his exploits are enumerated. A second enquiry and a second reply lead to a con-

firmation of the former statement, with additional titles and dignities bestowed upon him; the last being the highest and most glorious of all, and involving absolute, supreme and eternal deity—*God over all, for ever bless'd*. The whole subject, when thus applied to the ascension of the Lord Jesus, and his reception in the abodes of endless bliss, is invested with the deepest importance, and exhibits all the beauty and sublimity, which characterize poetry of the highest order. One might indeed say, without any impropriety, that the Jewish bard is here excelled by the Christian poet: because the latter, guided by the superior light of the gospel dispensation, and enjoying in the largest measure the gift of the Holy Spirit, understood these divine mysteries far better, than even the favoured Son of Jesse could understand them in his day.

Hymn 556 is an excellent and evangelical paraphrase of Psalm cxxi. It beautifully sets forth the safety and security of those, who trust in the providential care of their heavenly Father; and, in the concluding verse, holds out to the Christian believer the great privilege of being made *like his spotless Master—full of wisdom, love and power—holy, pure and perfect*.

Hymn 557 is a fine and spirited composition, well adapted for public use, in the great congregation.

Hymn 558—"Come, Lord, from above, The mountains
remove."—

In this lively and instructive hymn the way of salvation is clearly pointed out, and we are taught that it is to be obtained not by works of righteousness which we have done, but through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The marrow of the gospel scheme lies in those beautiful lines—

"Who on Jesus relies, Without money or price,
The pearl of forgiveness and holiness buys."

Hymn 559 is an elegant composition on the mystery of Divine Providence, and abounds in poetical figures and images. The sea, the storm, the subterranean regions, where the labours of the miner and the collier are carried on, the fertilizing showers, the sun shining out after the rain, the process of vegetation in the bud, ripening and unfolding itself, till the flower appears—all these are seized on by the poet, and laid under contribution to his purpose. Some have objected to the antithesis in these two lines—

"The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

This, it has been said, is not correct, because flowers are not literally *sweet*—not sweet in that sense, in which *sweet* is the reverse of *bitter*. A bud is truly and literally bitter; but a flower is not truly and literally sweet; not sweet to the taste, whatever it may be to the smell. If

this however be a blemish, it is only one fault in the midst of many excellencies; and the hymn has been, in instances innumerable, a source of encouragement and consolation to the tried, afflicted and distressed followers of the Redeemer.

CHAPTER X.

REMARKS ON VARIOUS HYMNS, CONCLUDED.

HYMNS 561, 601, 649 are noble and instructive compositions, addressed respectively to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. They are valuable, as embodying many scriptural ideas as to that, which belongs specially and peculiarly to each of the distinct persons of the godhead.

Hymns 564, 565, 566 are an elegant paraphrase of that sublime devotional piece, so admirably adapted to public worship—*Te Deum laudamus*.

The hymns in Section I. of the Supplement, 561 to 600, are in general well adapted for public worship, and may be used with advantage in the great congregation. There is however in some of them one fault, which ought to be noticed; that is, the entire absence of any reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, or to the glorious work of redemption, or to the benefits of that redemption as realized by the believer. Some of them are hymns, such as might be sung by the holy angels, or such as might have been sung by Adam previous to his fall. If for instance we refer to that fine composition of

Addison, Hymn 592, we find it abounding in noble sentiments, grateful acknowledgments of the divine goodness, and devout resolutions to praise and glorify God. But is it not strange, that the poet, while referring to the various displays of the divine benevolence, and enumerating some of the blessings bestowed upon him by a bountiful God, never once refers to the inestimable gift of God's only-begotten Son, never alludes to the glorious work of human redemption? He does indeed speak of *dangers, toils and deaths*, and of the *pleasing snares of vice*; but there is no expression whatever, conveying any idea that man is a polluted and guilty creature, or that he needs the pardon of his sins and a change of heart. This hymn therefore, though excellent, as far as it goes, is chargeable with a capital defect, an unpardonable omission. It needs to have some such hymn as 595, or 640, or 37 appended to it, in order to make it suitable to a Christian congregation. It does not either directly or indirectly recognize Him, who is the only way of access to the Father, the only medium of intercourse between the just and holy God, and his guilty and polluted creatures, without whom neither will our praises be accepted nor our prayers be answered.

Our hymns of praise to Almighty God should always be formed somewhat on the model of that admirable thanksgiving in our national

liturgy, which teaches us to bless God for our *creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life, but above all, for his inestimable love in the redemption of the world, by our Lord Jesus Christ*. Minor blessings ought not to be forgotten; but we should ever acknowledge the gift of the Saviour, and the redemption of the world through him, as the most amazing display of the divine benevolence, and as claiming from us the most ardent gratitude, the most lively praises, and the most devout consecration of all our ransomed powers to the service of our Heavenly Father. The same inexcusable deficiency appears in other compositions of considerable poetical merit; as in Hymns 567, 765; where, if the authorship were unknown, one would hardly suspect that they were written by a Christian.

The hymns on the incarnation of Christ, 602 to 605, and those on his characters as the light of the gentiles, the light of the world, Immanuel, God with us, 606 to 609, are fine specimens of sacred poetry, and present to us almost every idea, that can be legitimately connected with those most interesting topics.

Hymn 613 on the crucifixion, is solemn, grand and dignified, well adapted to the subject.

Hymns 614, 615, 619 refer to the sacrifices of the Mosaic law, as mere types or emblems of the sacrifice offered by Jesus Christ, when he expired on Calvary.

Hymn 616 is an instructive and encouraging composition, in the same cheerful and lively metre as Hymns 160, 205, 558. It teaches the poor helpless sinner, how he may avail himself of the provisions of redeeming mercy, and, by faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ, secure a present pardon and salvation.

Hymns 617, 618, 621, 622, 623 are all very excellent, both in sentiment and in language.

Hymn 624 beautifully takes up the idea of the rock cleft, as applicable to the Redeemer of the world, and expresses the believer's determination to renounce every other plea, and to depend solely on the atonement of Christ, for pardon and eternal life.

Hymn 625 is a very lively and spirited composition; in which, without indulging in any unscriptural fancies or speculations, the poet endeavours to shew how the holy angels have been instructed and benefitted by the glorious scheme of human redemption. The scene so graphically described in verse 4, we may conceive to be something like what actually occurred, when the Redeemer entered with his glorified body into the courts of heaven. If at the time of his first appearance in our world, when he was just entering on his all-important work, the Father had said—*Let all the angels of God worship him*; now, that he had finished that work, having made atonement for all the sins of

all mankind, and was returning to his native skies, to resume the glory which for a time he had laid aside, and to present his human nature among the tenants of those blissful regions, it is reasonable to suppose that the holy angels would hail his return, and hasten to pay their homage to him, whom they acknowledge as their Creator and their Lord. In verse 5 we have a bold and striking passage—

“The wounds, the blood! they heard its voice,
That heighten’d all their highest joys.”

For ascribing a voice to the blood of Christ, our poet has the authority of the apostle (Heb. xii. 24); and the fine hyperbole in the next line may remind us of some noble lines of Milton, who introduces Satan as saying—

“And in the lowest deep, a lower deep,
Still threatening to devour me, opens wide.”

And we have another parallel in the saying of the apostle, who calls himself *less than the least of all saints*.

In the close of this admirable hymn, the poet, having spoken of the inconceivable happiness of the angels, says—

“But all your heaven, ye glorious powers,
And all your God is doubly ours.”

Yes; as redeemed sinners, we have, so to speak, a double claim to all these blessings. We expect

them, as being children of God, and if children, then heirs; heirs of the blissful inheritance above: we expect them, as resulting from the unbounded benevolence of our heavenly Father towards us, his unworthy children. But we expect them also as the purchase of the blood of Jesus Christ, and in virtue of that peculiar relationship subsisting between us and the Redeemer. For we have a greater interest in him, than the holy angels have; he is our kinsman, our brother; and we are not only *heirs of God*, but *joint-heirs with Christ*; and we accordingly expect to share in all the honors and enjoyments allotted to our Saviour's glorified human nature. The wonderful scheme of redemption has conferred on us double benefits, and laid us under double obligations. For now in our ascriptions of praise to the Lamb of God, we can join in the new song, and use language which the holy angels cannot adopt, exclaiming, in everlasting transports of gratitude and joy—*Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever; Amen.*

The Hymns on the resurrection and ascension of Christ, 629 to 633, are all of superior excellence, both as to sentiment and as to diction.

Some indeed have objected to a couplet of verse 2, Hymn 633—

“ All thy people are forgiven
Through the virtue of thy blood ”—

as though it intimated something like the doctrine of universal pardon, or favoured the antinomian error. These objections however are not well founded. The passage does not state in a loose and general way, that all persons, indiscriminately, are forgiven, but only *all thy people*; which is just tantamount to the promise—*He shall save his people from their sins.* *All thy people* evidently means all true believers, and none besides; all, who repenting of their sins, apprehend the provisions of the gospel, by faith in Christ. We have the same sentiment in verse 5 of Hymn 5—

“ We all are forgiven For Jesus’s sake ”—

where no qualifying word is expressed; but the meaning is obvious—*We all*, that is, all true believers. In the preceding lines the poet had been exhorting his fellow-sinners to return to God—

“ Then let us submit His grace to receive,
Fall down at his feet And gladly believe ;

Then follows the line—

We all are forgiven For Jesus’s sake ”—

As though he had said—In this way and on

these terms, we all may be forgiven : if we submit to God, receive his grace, and believe in the Saviour, we shall all be forgiven, for Christ's sake ; and then through his atonement, we acquire a good and valid title to the heavenly inheritance—for,

“ Our title to heaven His merits we take.”

Hymn 639 is a very beautiful and spirited paraphrase of the former part of Psalm xlv. In this composition, which is eminently characteristic of Charles Wesley, the English poet appears to have caught somewhat of that sacred fire, which glowed in the bosom of the Hebrew monarch and bard, when he penned the truly noble original.

Hymn 640 is a very cheerful and spirited composition, and a general favourite among true Christians. It is founded on the scene depicted in Revelation v. 11 to 13 ; and represents heaven and earth, angels and men, yea the whole intelligent creation as united in the delightful work of praising the Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God that was slain for sinful man.

Hymn 645 beautifully applies the Jewish festival of the Jubilee to the Christian dispensation, reminding sinners that in this sense *the year of Jubilee is come* ; and inviting them, on this ground, to return home to their God and Saviour, that they may regain their liberty, recover their forfeited inheritance, and secure all the invaluable

able blessings, so freely offered in the glorious gospel.

Hymn 647 is a fine hymn in sentiment and expression, though defective in the rhyme.

Hymns 612, 620, 634, 636, 646, 648, 679, 680, 744, though unexceptionable in point of sentiment, are deficient in poetical merit and in dignity of language, and are scarcely worthy of being associated with the elegant and impassioned productions of Charles Wesley.

Hymns 651, 656, though not of Wesleyan origin, are excellent both in sentiment and in language, and point out the experience of a true Christian in a clear, distinct and impressive way.

Hymn 669—"The God of Abraham praise."—

670—"Though nature's strength decay."—

671—"Before the great Three-One."—

This is a fine and noble composition; though the metre is very uncommon, and the short line of four syllables, recurring in every fourth line, may be thought somewhat deficient in dignity. But the sentiments are so excellent, the language so manly, the flow of the metre and rhyme so easy and regular, and withal the spirit of the whole so devotional and edifying, and its exhibition of Christian privileges and Christian prospects so encouraging and delightful, that the hymn is highly valued by all who know how to appreciate sacred poetry.

Hymns 673, 674, 675 are admirable compositions, as recommending, by various weighty considerations, unlimited trust in Divine Providence. The two former especially abound in bold, just, and well-expressed sentiments. Hymn 674, though a translation from the German, has considerable beauty of diction. In the first, second and fourth lines of verse 1; instead of the regular movement of three iammbuses, we have a trochee and two iammbuses. Hence the first syllable being long, and strongly accented, and being immediately followed by two short syllables, this arrangement gives to those lines a very spirited and lively character.

Gīve tō | thē wīnds | thŷ fēars—
 Hōpe ānd | bē ūn | dīsmāyed—
 Gōd shāl | līft ūp | thŷ hēad—

The third line being longer, consisting entirely of monosyllables, and commencing with a spondee instead of an iambus, is strongly distinguished from the other lines by a more slow, stately and solemn movement—

Gōd hēars | thŷ sīghs | ānd cōunts | thŷ tēars—

Here we are, as it were, compelled to reckon every word, one by one. And this may be considered as intimating the minute and condescending attention paid to our concerns by the God of heaven: as though every single sigh were heard, as though every single tear were

noticed. Verse 2 also is peculiarly excellent: the first and third lines consist entirely of monosyllables, the first beginning with a spondee; the third, with two spondees—

Thrōugh wāves | ānd cloūd̄s | ānd stōrms—
Wāit thōu | hīs tīme | sō shāll | thīs nīght—

The slow and measured movement of these lines accords admirably with the great duty enjoined—that of waiting patiently for God.

The last verse of this hymn is intimately connected with the name of the late excellent William Dawson of Barnbow, near Leeds, and with the record of his dying moments. That eminently useful man, when just on the point of passing into eternity, commenced repeating this verse, and had just strength enough to say—

“Let us in life, in death,
Thy stedfast truth declare.”

He could proceed no further; his voice was lost in death, and he immediately fell asleep in Jesus.

Hymn 677 is a beautiful paraphrase and application of verses 1, 2, 4 of Psalm cxxv. And here as in all similar cases, our Christian poet is careful not to rest merely in such views as might be supposed to be adopted by an enlightened heathen, or a devout Jew; but he casts the whole into a Christian mould, by introducing the *sprinkled blood* of the Redeemer, and *Jesu's guardian love*. If Addison had paraphrased that

same psalm, he would have thrown into his composition equal elegance and strength of diction, but he would have said probably nothing about the sprinkled blood, or the love of Jesus, or the sanctification of the soul.

Hymn 681 is a spirited application, to believers generally, of the noble sentiment uttered by St. Paul, in reference to his public and ministerial labours.

Hymn 682 is a fine and instructive declaration of trust in Christ, as a complete and all-sufficient Saviour. It encourages us to expect most confidently, that through the power and grace of God, and through faith in the Redeemer, we shall, while living here below, obtain the pearl of perfect love or entire holiness.

Hymn 683—Here the metaphor of *looking unto Christ* is beautifully and strikingly applied. Believers are represented as *gazing upward*, till they *feel the stamp divine*; that beholding the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, they may be changed into the same image. The life of the true Christian is finely described in verse 3—

“O that our life might be
One looking up to thee!”

and so closely is the life of grace on earth connected with the life of glory in heaven, that the poet almost insensibly glides from one to the other, and concludes with one of his favourite

wishes, that our probation may be instantly terminated, and time exchanged for eternity.

Hymn 684 applies the history of Daniel's deliverance from the lions to the case of the believer, exercised by various troubles and dangers ; and teaches us to rely on the God of Daniel, who is still supreme and almighty ; on Jesus, the angel of the Covenant, who indeed is identical with the Lord and God of Daniel.

Hymn 686 shews us how Christians are called to imitate the faith manifested by Abraham, when he left his country and his kindred, going forth in obedience to the divine command, not knowing whither he went, but relying on the goodness and wisdom, power and fidelity of his covenant God.

Hymn 688 is an expansion of our Lord's words—*Blessed are the pure in heart ; for they shall see God.* It teaches us to pray for spotless purity, the purity of love ; perfect love upon earth, as preparatory to the glorious sight of God in heaven.

Hymn 689 celebrates the kingdom of the Messiah, exhibits him as worthy, by reason of his glorious perfections, to sway the sceptre of universal empire, and invites angelic beings of every order and rank to unite with earth-born man in the praises of the Redeemer. Those exalted creatures, so high in glory and bliss, are exhorted to veil their eyes, to fall prostrate, and

to cast their crowns before Him, who is their Lord and King, as well as our's.

Hymn 690 is a joyous and triumphant celebration of the same topic, the glorious and universal kingdom of Jesus Christ, and was originally intended *to be sung in a tumult*. Twice the poet boldly apostrophizes Satan and the infernal hosts, defying them in the name of the Lord, and commanding them to fear and tremble—

“Every knee to him shall bow ;
Satan, hear, and tremble now.”

“God with us, we cannot fear ;
Fear, ye fiends, for Christ is here.”

How noble, how grand, how sublime is the attitude here assumed by the Christian believer ! exactly corresponding with the sentiments of the apostle, when, defying all the powers of darkness, he exclaimed—*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us*. In verses 4, 5, the interesting and instructive narrative of Elisha in the city of Dothan, sought after by the king of Syria, but defended by chariots of fire and horses of fire all round about the mountain, is beautifully applied. To the eye of sense the Christian appears exposed, defenceless, liable to ruin. His enemies are numerous and mighty ; how can he contend

with them? how can he protect or extricate himself? his case appears hopeless, his destruction inevitable; but O! the blessed security of the child of God!

“Lo! to faith’s enlighten’d sight,
All the mountain flames with light;
Hell is nigh; but God is nigher,
Circling us with hosts of fire.”

Yes; his holy angels are the chariots of fire and horses of fire, sent to protect defend, and deliver those who put their trust in him. If the almighty Jesus be our King, and we his loyal and obedient subjects, we need not fear the opposition of our enemies. We shall be enabled to triumph over all.

Hymn 691 is founded on the views of the person, character and work of the Redeemer furnished by the sacred writer, Revelation vi. 2, and xix. 11 to 16. Whatever opinion we may entertain as to the interpretation of these and similar portions of Holy Writ, and as to the way in which the unfulfilled prophecies are to receive their accomplishment, we are perfectly safe in thus applying them to practical purposes, and in turning them into prayers for the universal establishment of the kingdom of Christ. The poet does not dwell on any doubtful points, on any matters of mere speculation; but contents himself with those general views of the Re-

deemer's kingdom, in which all sober-minded Christians concur.

Hymns 692 to 703 all refer to the spread of the gospel, the universal effusion of the Holy Spirit, and the subjugation of the whole earth to the sceptre of Jesus Christ. They are admirably adapted to Missionary occasions and purposes.

In Hymn 704 the poet avails himself of the sentiments ascribed to the Lord Jesus, when he was moved with compassion towards the multitudes, whom he beheld, *as sheep having no shepherd*; and he appeals to Christ as the good Shepherd, on behalf of those, who were not as yet gathered into his fold.

Hymns 705, 706, 707, 708 are excellent prayers for the success of the preached gospel, and the prosperity of the work of God.

Hymns 709, 710 are profitable applications of the prayer, offered by the vine-dresser on behalf of the barren fig tree—*Let it alone this year also*; and are peculiarly appropriate to the beginning of a new year.

Hymns 711, 714 are among the best compositions of the excellent Doddridge; they are beautiful, devout, cheerful and edifying.

Hymns 712, 713 admirably display the spirit and temper in which we ought ever to enter on a new year. They exhibit those recollections of the past, and those purposes as to the future,

which are always proper, on those solemn and interesting occasions. That is a particularly sublime and delightful idea at the close of Hymn 712, where the Lord Jesus is introduced as appearing in the clouds, to

“ Bring the grand sabbatic year,
The Jubilee of heaven.”

That will indeed be the great, the universal, the everlasting Sabbath ; when all the united choirs of saints and angels shall sing the never-ending song of glory to the triune God. Earth has had its jubilees ; its seasons of liberty and exultation and triumph ; but the jubilee of heaven is yet to come. Then will it commence, when all the designs of redeeming mercy shall have been accomplished ; when all the children of God of every age and place shall be gathered into one, and safely lodged in their final home, so that the family of God shall be presented complete, before his glorious presence. Then shall the circle of the heavenly hosts be filled up, no deficiency whatever remaining, and that world of glory shall resound with their joyful acclamations, “ long as eternal ages roll.”

In Hymn 715 the poet contemplates the manner of our Saviour’s death, and takes up one of the expressions which fell from his lips, while he was hanging on the cross. The dying saint is here encouraged to adopt the Redeemer’s

language as his own, and to believe, that, in so doing, he will obtain all the support and consolation, that he will need at that solemn crisis.

Hymn 717 is a fine and deeply-affecting composition. Perhaps the last line of verse 2—

“Born only to lament and die”—

is too strong, and tends to give too melancholy a view of human life. It corresponds with verse 1 of Hymn 44—“And am I only born to die?” But when the mind is powerfully impressed with the momentous subjects of death and eternity, it is not to be wondered at, if for the time, other things should vanish from our sight, and we should employ language that is somewhat hyperbolic. The petition in verses 3, 4 may be adopted by the true Christian, with a full persuasion that his request will be granted—

“———when thou sendest, Lord, for me,
O let the messenger be love!”

“Whisper thy love into my heart;
Warn me of my approaching end.”

Here there is nothing wild, extravagant, or fanciful: all, though deeply solemn, is reasonable and consistent with Scripture.

Hymns 718, 726 are beautiful adaptations of the language of the patriarch Job to the circumstances and prospects of the Christian believer. In noble and triumphant strains he anticipates the resurrection of his body, and the rapturous

and beatific vision of the Lord Jesus in his glory, and then he calmly and joyfully drops the mouldering clay, and waits for the coming of his Divine Redeemer. The sentiments are grand, and the diction is animated and dignified. We cannot fail to notice in the original passage, Job xix. 25, 26, 27—the idea on which the venerable patriarch appeared to dwell with such delight—that he should see his Redeemer, his God—and which is expressed thrice in three consecutive clauses—*I shall see God—whom I shall see for myself—mine eyes shall behold and not another.* Just so our poet thrice repeats the verb *see* in three consecutive lines of verse 3—

“ Shall see that self-same Saviour nigh,
See for myself my smiling Lord,
See with ineffable delight.”

The alliteration in these three lines is also worthy of notice, there being *eight* words beginning with the letter *s*.

Hymn 724 is written in a very lively and spirited metre, and expresses the full triumph of faith. It refers to the death of a saint, and teaches us to anticipate our re-union with pious departed friends in the heavenly world. So strong indeed is the faith here expressed, and so lively are the impressions of eternal things produced thereby, that the distance between the present moment and that of our dissolution is,

as it were, contracted into nothing, and the event is spoken of in the last verse, not as future, but as present.

“ The convoy attends,
A ministering host of invisible friends.
Ready wing'd for their flight
To the regions of light,
The horses are come,
The chariots of Israel to carry us home.”

Hymn 725 is an exquisitely beautiful and pathetic composition. Nothing can be more appropriate to the case of the dying Christian; nothing more consolatory, or more delightful.

Hymns 733, 734, 735 are very fine and noble specimens of sacred poetry, which appeared first in the volume of “Funeral Hymns,” published by Mr. Charles Wesley in 1759. Almost every idea that we can legitimately form, as to the state, employment and happiness of departed saints, may be found embodied in these three hymns, and clothed in language glowing, yet chaste—elegant, yet simple—impassioned, yet correct. Hymn 733 describes the child of grace, his present happiness, his glorious prospects, his temporary separation from beloved friends by death, and his speedy re-union with them in the heavenly world. In this blessed hope he exults while here below, and longing that mortality may be swallowed up in life, he prays that the

earthen vessel may break, and that he may be allowed at once to depart, and to gaze for ever on the beatific vision.

Hymn 734 is peculiarly adapted to those who are enfeebled by age or by disease, and who are expecting soon to enter the eternal world. It enters more fully into the enjoyments of the heavenly state, and places before the eye of faith rivers of life—trees of paradise—the vivifying stream—the ambrosial fruit—a world of bright spirits, all radiant with glory, following the Lamb—striking their harmonious lutes, and praising the triune Deity. With such prospects the child of God, in the midst of all his trials and sorrows, enters into the spirit of the apostle's sentiment—*the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*—and triumphantly exclaims—

“ O what are all my sufferings here,
If, Lord, thou count me meet
With that enraptur'd host to appear,
And worship at thy feet!”

These admirable words have probably yielded consolation to thousands of pious souls, when they have been passing through the valley of the shadow of death, and contending with the last enemy; when they have been on the very point of exchanging the sufferings of earth for the enjoyments of Paradise.

Hymn 735 beautifully expands the idea, that saints above and saints below, the church militant on earth and the church triumphant in heaven, are all, one—one family—one army. Thus we are taught, while yet in the body, to realize the communion of saints. For a time this family is divided; its members are separated from each other by death; this narrow stream is flowing between the two divisions of the army. But even now the intercourse is not totally suspended; by faith we hold communion with those who are gone before; we not only long for our re-union and haste to see them again, but by faith we join hands with them, we greet them already: and soon faith shall be turned into sight; for we shall see our Captain's sign, we shall hear the trumpet's sound, the word of command will be given, the waves shall be divided, and we shall all be landed in heaven. Had Charles Wesley composed nothing but these three incomparable hymns, he would have conferred a great and lasting benefit on the church of God, and would have immortalized his name as a Christian poet.

Hymn 737 is an elegant and devotional composition of that highly-gifted lady, Mrs. Agnes Bulmer, consort and relict of Joseph Bulmer, Esq., of London. It was written at the special request of James Wood, Esq., of Manchester, and was first sung in that town, 11th July, 1825, on

occasion of laying the foundation-stones of the Wesleyan chapels in Oxford-road and in Ancoats-lane.

Hymns 740, 741, 742, 743 are all intended to accompany the administration of infant baptism. They very properly assume that God will own that ordinance, and teach us to claim and expect a present blessing on behalf of those, who are thus solemnly and conscientiously devoted to the service of the ever-adorable Trinity. Some of the expressions in Hymn 740 are indeed so strong, that they need a little qualification. In verse 3 we pray—

“Whate’er thou didst for man intend,
Whate’er thou hast on man bestow’d,
Now to this favour’d child be given,
Pardon and holiness and heaven.”

We cannot mean surely, that pardon, holiness and heaven in all their fulness should be at once communicated to the Infant, unless we were disposed to pray for its instant death and its consequent admission into glory. All that we can properly mean is, what is expressed in the last two lines of the preceding verse—

“The seed of endless life impart;
Take for thine own this infant’s heart.”

We are authorized to believe that God will, in connexion with his own ordinance and in answer to the prayer of faith, communicate special grace

to an infant thus publicly and solemnly dedicated to him: that he will implant that supernatural principle, which, being retained and improved and matured, will issue in pardon and holiness here, and heaven hereafter. And who will venture to assert that an infant is incapable of receiving some measure of the gift of the Holy Ghost—such a measure as is suited to its state and capacity—and in such a way, that if that infant be obedient and faithful, this heavenly influence, communicated in the ordinance of baptism, shall grow with its growth, and strengthen with its strength—shall prove a successful antagonist to the corruption and depravity of its nature—and shall lead it forward, at an early period of life, to repentance and to faith in Christ, and to the enjoyment of inward and experimental religion. We know that *little children*, yea *infants*, are capable of receiving the blessing of the Lord Jesus; for in the days of his flesh, when some were brought to him, he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them and blessed them. And we know that infants are capable of being regenerated, sanctified and saved; because thousands, dying in infancy, are infallibly saved through the atonement of Jesus Christ; and of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Hymns 748, 749, 750 are excellently adapted to the services, usually connected with the re-

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Hymns 748, 749, 750 are excellently adapted to the services, usually connected with the re-

newal of the covenant, at the commencement of a new year. Here we are well taught to acknowledge past unfaithfulness, to humble ourselves in the dust and ashes before God, to lay hold again of the gracious provisions of the gospel, and to bind ourselves anew to our God and Saviour, in bonds never to be loosened, in a covenant never to be forgotten.

Hymns 752, 753, 754 are fine and spirited compositions, well adapted to the celebration of the Lord's supper. The poet teaches us to rise on such occasions from earth to heaven—to mount into the mansions of the blest—to triumph with the saints above—and tells us, that, when admitted to the beatific vision, we shall—

“ Lose in that transporting sight
All we felt or fear'd below;
Torrents of unmix'd delight
There our raptur'd souls o'erflow.”

Here indeed we have noble ideas, expressed in bold and striking language; *delight*, and that, not intermixed with toils and sorrows and woes, but pure, unmixed, free from all alloy; *unmixed delight*, not in small and scanty measures, not in inconsiderable streams or rivulets, but *torrents*; full, abundant, inexhaustible torrents, flowing from the unfathomable ocean of Deity into the enlarged capacity of the glorified saint. What can exceed this? And not only do we anticipate

all these ecstasies of joy; by faith we already enter into them—

“Now in heaven with Christ we dwell,
Now the bliss of heaven we taste.”

Hymn 755 is an elegant and spirited prayer for our Sovereign, and exhibits a fine specimen of Christian patriotism and loyalty.

Hymns 757, 758 are excellent compositions, well adapted for the purposes of morning and evening devotion. They are simple and elegant, devout and evangelical. The concluding doxology, verse 5 of Hymn 757, has been justly admired for the way in which it amplifies one great and leading idea. The burden of each line is, the invitation to join in praising God. In the first line, a good and sufficient motive to this duty is suggested in the consideration that from him *all blessings flow*; in the second line, the duty is enforced on *all creatures here below*, upon earth; in the third line, the inhabitants of the heavenly world are invited to join in the same delightful work; and in the last line we are taught, that our praises are due to each distinct person of the sacred Trinity. Thus one idea is carried forward and expanded through the whole stanza.

Hymns 759, 760 are very affecting, if considered in their intended use, as a prayer for dying malefactors. Mr. Charles Wesley felt

much for that unhappy class of beings ; he frequently visited them and prayed with them, and occasionally preached to them ; and in various ways he endeavoured to lead them to humiliation, to true repentance, and to faith in the only Saviour of sinners. For such purposes nothing can be better adapted than these hymns.

Hymns 761, 762, 763, 764 are admirable hymns to be sung by those who are going to sea, or are actually traversing the mighty deep. They acknowledge the glorious perfections of Jehovah, especially as exhibited in the ocean, and teach us to regard this God in Christ, as our ever-present protector, our all-sufficient friend. Thus in the midst of storms and tempests, dangers and deaths, true believers are calm, tranquil and happy.

Hymn 765 is fine in sentiment, as far as it goes, and beautiful in language ; but, like Addison's other compositions, very defective, as containing no Christianity ; as having no reference whatever, direct or indirect, to the only Redeemer of man, and as being fitted rather for a race of pure and innocent beings, than for the guilty and polluted descendants of fallen Adam. It forms, in these respects, a striking contrast to the three preceding hymns of Charles Wesley.

Hymns 766, 767 are noble compositions, well adapted for the use of Christian assemblies, when

meeting in the watch-night, at the solemn mid-night hour. The saints of the Most High are here taught to rejoice in their God and Saviour, and to triumph in hope of meeting him in the skies, soaring with him to the highest heaven, and sharing in his glory and bliss for ever.

Hymn 768 is an elegant paraphrase of Psalm cxxx. It very properly interprets and applies that instructive composition on evangelical principles, introducing the *gospel-day*, and *redemption through the blood* of Christ, who is truly and properly *the Lord, our righteousness*.

Hymn 769 is excellent as a hymn of praise, first to each person of the sacred Trinity distinctly, and then to the three divine persons, united in the essence of the Godhead ; to whom be all honor, praise and glory for ever ! Amen.

CHAPTER XI.

GENERAL ADVICES AND CAUTIONS.

THAT every thing, however good and excellent in itself, is liable to abuse, and may thus become an occasion of evil, none will presume to deny. Such are the folly and depravity of our fallen nature, that the choicest gifts of God are by many perverted to their own injury and ruin. Hence it is deemed proper and necessary to subjoin some general advices relative to the use of the Wesleyan Hymn Book, and cautions against some of those evils, into which many have run.

And first of all let it be remarked, that we should guard against a careless and indiscriminate use of the hymns. Even if we are using the book in the privacy of the dwelling-house or of the closet, we are not to imagine that every hymn is adapted to every person, or that we may properly and advantageously employ any portion of the work, at all times and under all circumstances. As individuals, it is highly desirable, that when we sit down to use this volume, we should endeavour to ascertain what is our true character. Are we careless, unawak-

ened sinners? or are we penitent and humbled sinners? or are we genuine Christian believers? Are we passing through scenes of affliction and distress? or are we burdened with the cares and anxieties of life? or are we troubled at the prospect of impending evils? Are we specially concerned about our own individual welfare, the prosperity of our souls? or are we particularly anxious to promote the conversion and edification of our beloved relatives and friends? Do the interests of the church of Christ, or those of our own country, or those of the world at large—press heavily on our minds? In any of these cases we ought to seek for appropriate hymns. And here we may easily find such as will be suitable; such as will aid us in our devotional exercises, and will strengthen and encourage in us every wise and good and holy principle.

If we are disposed to rejoice in the Lord, and to take our share of those consolations, which belong to true Christians, we have an abundant supply of choice and admirable hymns in section 1 of Part 4, (Hymns 189 to 264) and in Section 5 of the Supplement, (Hymns 669 to 688.) If we are more disposed to enter into the depths of penitential feeling and Christian humility, there are many hymns in Part 3, (Hymns 99 to 188) and in Section 4 of the Supplement, (Hymns 659 to 668,) that will meet our views. Should circumstances lead us to dwell on the infinitely

solemn subjects of death, judgment and eternity, nothing can be more appropriate than the Hymns 41 to 66 and 709 to 722. And if our thoughts carry us onward into the abodes of celestial bliss, Hymns 67 to 79 and 723 to 735 will furnish us with ample materials.

But while it is confessedly important, that we should, even in our private engagements, use this book cautiously and judiciously, the necessity of such caution and judgment is still greater and more obvious, in social and public worship. A careless and improper use of the work may, in one case, injure an individual; in the other case, it may injure many; the evil may extend to scores or hundreds of persons. The writer would therefore recommend to every one who selects a hymn for public use, either in a smaller and more select assembly, or in a larger and more promiscuous one, to enquire first whether it is suitable for such assembly, for the whole or for any considerable portion of those who are present; whether the language can be employed safely and truly and advantageously, by some or by many of them. In large and promiscuous companies we should for the most part confine ourselves to hymns of a general character; such as relate to the goodness of God; such as celebrate his glorious perfections and the provisions of his redeeming love; such as abound in praise and thanksgiving, or in petitions, without entering

deeply and minutely into religious experience. The peculiar excellence of many of the hymns—the high tone of devout sentiment, which pervades them—the exalted spirit of piety, which they breathe—are in fact the very things that make them unfit for general and indiscriminate use. They are too good for such purposes; too deep in meaning, too minute, and too accurate in describing the feelings and wants, the exercises and desires of genuine Christians. Hymns of an inferior order might be used more freely and with less danger. It is questionable whether we ought ever to give out for singing, in large and promiscuous congregations, such verses or lines as the following—

“ I thirst, I faint, I die to prove
The greatness of redeeming love ”—

“ For love I sigh, for love I pine ”—

“ I hunger now, I thirst for God ”—

“ Jesus, for thee distress'd I am ”—

“ My heart, thou know'st, can never rest,
'Till thou create my peace ”—

“ Jesus, see my panting breast!
See! I pant in thee to rest ”—

“ O love! I languish at thy stay,
I pine for thee with lingering smart ”—

“ Lord! at thy feet I fall,
I groan to be set free ”—

“ My soul breaks out in strong desire
The perfect bliss to prove ;
My longing heart is all on fire
To be dissolv'd in love.”

Such strong and glowing language may very properly be employed by those for whom it is intended ; namely, by mourners convinced of sin, and earnestly seeking the salvation of God ; or by Christian believers, who are eagerly pursuing that state of entire holiness, set before us in the volume of inspiration. But for others to adopt such expressions would be improper and unjustifiable : for unless the language of the lips correspond with the feelings of the heart and with the sincere desires of the soul, it is no better than a solemn mockery of the Most High : and our services in that case will be neither acceptable to God, nor beneficial to ourselves. In using the hymn-book therefore, we should always look at the character of the part, from which we make our selection. This is invariably indicated at the head of the page ; so that we cannot be at a loss to know, what may reasonably be expected in any particular portion of the volume, and whether any thing is likely to be found there, that will suit our purpose. There are, it is true, in those sections specially intended for mourners convinced of sin, or for believers seeking full redemption, many hymns, parts of which may be advantageously employed in public worship,

or in social parties. Only let a person be careful on such occasions to examine the hymn beforehand, to select such verses as are well adapted for general purposes, and to omit others. Thus of the Hymns in part 3 (from 99 to 188), many may, with a little care and caution, be adapted partially, if not wholly, to general use; as being descriptive of that experience which all true Christians have already realized in a greater or less degree, and which must be realized by all who wish to enter finally into the mansions of heavenly glory. A few words of explanation and of admonition, occasionally dropped by him who takes the lead in devotional exercises, might suffice to prevent misapprehension and abuse, and to secure the most profitable employment of the hymns.

Christian believers certainly cannot adopt as their own language, such verses as the following;

“Guilty I stand before thy face,
On me I feel thy wrath abide”—

“Out of the deep I cry,
Just at the point to die,
Hastening to infernal pain”—

“A sinner weltering in his blood,
Unpurged and unforgiven;
Far distant from the living God,
As far as hell from Heaven.”

“Shut up in unbelief, I groan.”

If therefore such verses be used at all by believers, it should be with the full and distinct recollection, that the language describes a state of guilt and wretchedness, from which they have happily been rescued; but that there still are those to whom such language is most appropriate; whose case we ought to remember, and for whose speedy deliverance we ought to pray. That fine and instructive composition, Hymn 127, might all be employed without scruple, if verse 7 were omitted. Hymn 137 might be so used, if verses 4 and 8 were excepted. In Hymn 144, it would be advisable to omit verse 2; in Hymn 155, verses 5, 6; and in Hymn 147, if verses 1 and 3 be employed at all, it should be done advisedly and sparingly. The same remark may be applied to that exquisitely-beautiful piece, Hymns 140, 141: in using which peculiar care and caution are necessary.

In the section for believers rejoicing, there are many hymns or parts of hymns, which express so strongly and fully the state and experience of those who have found redemption in the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of all their sins, that no other persons can properly employ them. Yet even in these, there are frequently some parts of a more general character, which may be used in promiscuous assemblies. Verse 3 of Hymn 189; verses 1, 2 of Hymn 190; verses 1, 2, 3 of Hymn 197; verses 4, 5 of Hymn 201; verses 4, 5 of

Hymn 202; verse 5 of Hymn 216; verse 2 of Hymn 217; and the whole of Hymns 191, 205, 206, 209, 213, 228, 246 are such, that none but true disciples of the Lord Jesus, happy in the pardoning love of God, can with any propriety adopt them. If they who have not yet been put in possession of the pearl of great price, venture to use such language at all, it must be in the way of petition and supplication, with earnest desires that God may speedily introduce them into this blessed state.

Another caution is, that we should never rest in the mere letter of the hymn, but should labour to enter fully into its spirit, so as to make it truly and properly our own. The mere letter of these compositions may indeed serve to enlighten the understanding, to correct the errors of our judgment, and to lead us to accurate views of religious subjects. But of what avail will it be to have the understanding enlightened, if the heart be not affected? What will it profit us, to be ever so well acquainted with the theory of religion, if there be not its experience in our hearts and its practice in our lives? The hymn book should be regarded and used as an important auxiliary in the pursuit of experimental and practical piety. As a substitute for personal religion, neither this nor any thing else will avail. But if we are favoured with these valuable helps, and yet derive no ultimate benefit

from them, they will tend to increase our guilt, and to bring down upon us in the end more awful punishment. The use of this book cannot fail to give us more correct views of religious subjects; it being scarcely possible to imagine that one who reads such hymns with even a moderate share of attention, should be ignorant of any of the great and leading doctrines of Holy Scripture. So that if we are not made wiser and better by means of this volume, there is reason to fear that our case will be like that of the servant, who knew his master's will, but prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, and who shall therefore be beaten with many stripes.

These hymns, in their proper and legitimate use, are calculated not only to lead us into the actual possession of personal piety, but to encourage and stimulate us to the diligent and faithful discharge of all domestic and relative duties. If husbands and wives, parents and children, masters or mistresses and servants, sovereigns and subjects, were to avail themselves of this manual, and to regulate their lives agreeably to the model therein presented, most happy would be the results. Such conduct would make every house the abode of peace and harmony and love; would unite all the members of each family in the bonds of affection; and would make them solicitous to promote each other's

temporal, spiritual and eternal welfare. It would bind together the various orders and classes of human society in the bonds of Christian benevolence. It would teach the wealthy to be kind, generous, ready to distribute, prompt to relieve the necessities and to mitigate the sufferings of their fellow-creatures : while the poor would be instructed to be patient, gentle, contented with their lot, and happy in the prospect of eternal exaltation in the world to come. By this volume masters would be taught to be just and kind in all their dealings with their servants ; while servants would be led to act faithfully and conscientiously in all the duties they owe to their masters. Parents would be induced to train up their children in the good and right way, seeking above all things to secure for them the favour and blessing of God ; and children would learn to requite the kindness and care of their parents with filial reverence and affection. Here also rulers and sovereigns might be taught to humble themselves before him, who is the universal King, and to use their power only for the benefit of those who are beneath their sway ; while subjects would learn the necessity of submission to just authority, and of obedience to the laws of the realm. In short, as the whole of the Hymn-Book is designed to recommend pure, genuine and primitive christianity in all


its bearings, it would tend to produce happy individuals, happy families, happy nations, and in the end a happy world. This will undoubtedly be the case, when God's gracious designs shall be accomplished, and when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, even as the waters cover the sea.

And as these hymns are remarkable for the just and scriptural views which they exhibit of the privileges of Christian believers, if we are only faithful in acting and living in a way consistent with those views, our growth in grace will be proportionably more rapid, and our actual experience will correspond with our avowed sentiments. Thus through the divine blessing and by the gracious agency of the Holy Spirit, we shall be led forward to realize the highest attainments in wisdom and holiness; thus shall we prove the utmost efficacy of the blood of Christ, in cleansing us from all inward pollution, and the full power of the Holy Spirit in sanctifying our whole nature.

Let all therefore who avail themselves of this poetical treasure, be careful so to use it, that it may tend to increase and confirm in them every thing that is wise and holy, useful and excellent. Let us endeavour to catch a measure of that holy ardour, which glowed in the bosoms of those apostolic men, to whom we are principally indebted for these hymns. Let us emulate their

deep piety, their fervent zeal, their disinterested labours to do good both to the bodies and the souls of their fellow-creatures, their efforts to extend the Redeemer's kingdom through all parts of our own country, and through every country on the face of the whole earth. Let us always take care to connect the use of these hymns with the daily perusal of the Holy Scriptures, with regular attendance on the public worship of God, with private prayer, with family devotion, and with all the exercises and fruits of practical godliness.

Thus, not as substitutes for personal piety, but as aids to its attainment, its growth and its maturity, will these compositions answer a most valuable purpose; and will assist in preparing us for the more exalted employments and pleasures of the heavenly state. While we are journeying through the wilderness of this world, we shall be solaced by these songs of Zion; the burdens of life will be lightened; we shall be strengthened to press forward through afflictions, discouragements and difficulties; and when we have to pass through the valley of the shadow of death and to contend with our last enemy, we shall be prepared for those infinitely solemn and important events. We shall then triumph in the prospect of dissolution; and passing into eternity, we shall exchange our earthly songs of prayer and praise for the nobler anthems of



its bearings, it would tend to produce happy individuals, happy families, happy nations, and in the end a happy world. This will undoubtedly be the case, when God's gracious designs shall be accomplished, and when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, even as the waters cover the sea.

And as these hymns are remarkable for the just and scriptural views which they exhibit of the privileges of Christian believers, if we are only faithful in acting and living in a way consistent with those views, our growth in grace will be proportionably more rapid, and our actual experience will correspond with our avowed sentiments. Thus through the divine blessing and by the gracious agency of the Holy Spirit, we shall be led forward to realize the highest attainments in wisdom and holiness; thus shall we prove the utmost efficacy of the blood of Christ, in cleansing us from all inward pollution, and the full power of the Holy Spirit in sanctifying our whole nature.

Let all therefore who avail themselves of this poetical treasure, be careful so to use it, that it may tend to increase and confirm in them every thing that is wise and holy, useful and excellent. Let us endeavour to catch a measure of that holy ardour, which glowed in the bosoms of those apostolic men, to whom we are principally indebted for these hymns. Let us emulate their

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Paradise, where all will be adoration and glory and bliss, holy joy and heavenly exultation for ever and ever. The song of the redeemed begins on earth, but is carried on in heaven ; it begins in time, but is extended through the ages of eternity. In that blissful world we shall behold that Redeemer, whose praises we delight to celebrate on earth, and shall unite our grateful and adoring accents with those of the innumerable company of angels, and of the general assembly and church of the first born, the saints of the Most High, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

May every reader of these pages secure these inestimable privileges ; and having experienced the joys of holiness here below, may they all be numbered finally among the inhabitants of the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem, and all unite in singing the never-ending song of praise and gratitude and thanksgiving and love to Him that sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen.

P. 47 - Vide. Burgess says (in
a letter to D. Freeman - Cheltenham
28 Nov. 1845) - Hymns 580 & 722
I ascribe to Miss Anne Steele
on ² authority of Rev. Hugh
Russell, Bap. Minister at
Broughton, near Stockbridge
Hants (Hampshire), a place
where Miss S. was born. ¹ Her father was a Bap. Minister in ² village
of ~~deed~~ ¹ he became a member
of his church, & died in 1778
in the 62^d year of her age.
Mr. R. informs me that Hymn
580 is part of a Hymn in
her works, Vol. 3. P. 138;
and ¹ hymn 722 consists of
part of her 39th Psalm

and is found in her works
Vol. 2. P. 169."

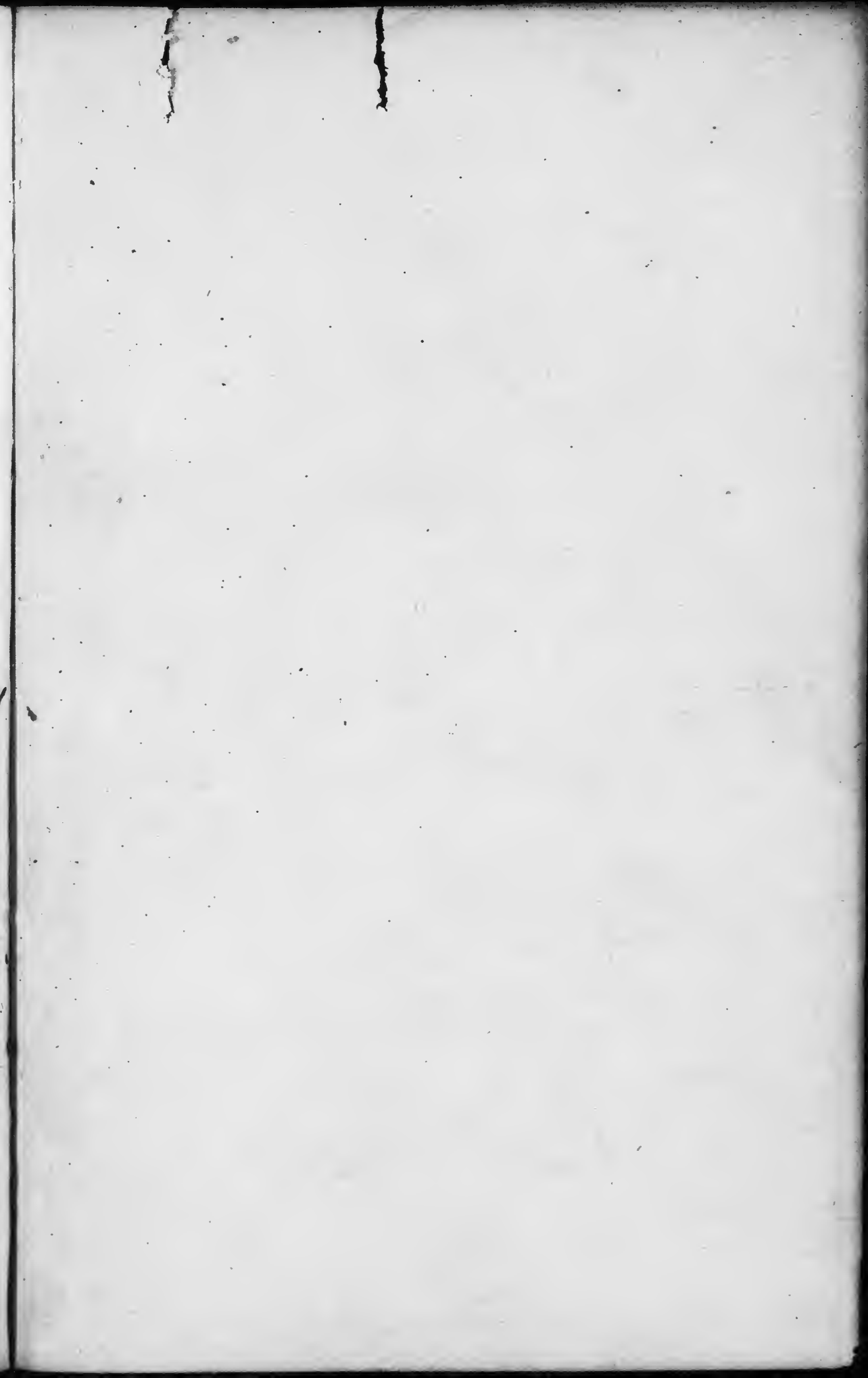
The first two vol.'s of her works
were published during her life
in 1760. with this title:

"Poems on Subjects chiefly
Devotional" in 2 Vol.

by Theodosia

The third vol. was posthumous
entitled Miscellaneous
Pieces in Prose & Verse. By
Theodosia 1780. Dr. A. L. C.
Evans of Bristol prefixed an
advertisement containing a brief
account of Mrs Steele.

See Rel. Mag. May 1829
P. 441.



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colleo.

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P. 36 - 41 determine question
of translation of German
Hymns by John Wesley -

